



National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES)

Multi-Sector General Permit (MSGP)

Outdoor activities that are exposed to the elements are potential sources of stormwater pollution. Of most concern are outdoor areas directly related to industrial manufacturing, processing, material handling and storage, equipment maintenance and cleaning, and waste management. Stormwater that comes in contact with these activities can pick up pollutants, and transport them directly to a nearby waterbody or indirectly via a storm sewer and degrade water quality. Federal regulations at 40 CFR 122.26(b)(14)(i)-(xi) require stormwater discharges associated with specific categories of industrial activity to be covered under NPDES permits (unless otherwise excluded). MSGPs regulate authorized stormwater discharges and authorized non-stormwater discharges associated with industrial activity from various industries, such as fertilizer manufacturing, petroleum refining, metal products and machinery, and other industrial categories under a single permit. One of the categories—construction sites that disturb five acres or more—is generally permitted separately because of the significant differences between those activities and the others. The 11 categories of regulated industrial activities are:

- Category One (i): Facilities subject to federal stormwater effluent discharge standards at 40 CFR Parts 405-471
- Category Two (ii): Heavy manufacturing (e.g., paper mills, chemical plants, petroleum refineries, steel mills and foundries)
- Category Three (iii): Coal and mineral mining and oil and gas exploration and processing
- Category Four (iv): Hazardous waste treatment, storage, and disposal facilities
- Category Five (v): Landfills, land application sites, and open dumps with industrial wastes
- Category Six (vi): Metal scrapyards, salvage yards, automobile junkyards, and battery reclaimers
- Category Seven (vii): Steam electric power generating plants
- Category Eight (viii): Transportation facilities that have vehicle maintenance, equipment cleaning, or airport deicing operations
- Category Nine (ix): Treatment works treating domestic sewage with a design flow of 1 million gallons a day or more
- Category Ten (x): Construction sites that disturb 5 acres or more (permitted separately)
- Category Eleven (xi): Light manufacturing (e.g., food processing, printing and publishing, electronic and other electrical equipment manufacturing, public warehousing and storage)

MSGPs include similar components to individual permits, including effluent limits that are protective of water quality and representative of applicable technology-based standards, monitoring and reporting projects, pollutant control measures, standard conditions, and other necessary requirements. Often the specific requirements for a facility are based on which industrial category the permittee falls into, although the bulk of the requirements are widely applicable to most facilities. For

example, permittees are often required to conduct routine quarterly facility inspections of areas where industrial materials or activities are exposed to stormwater, collect and analyze stormwater samples, implement a stormwater prevention pollution plan (SWPPP), and conduct corrective actions when deficiencies are identified. Category specific requirements contain items such as prohibitions of specific discharges, additional technology-based effluent limitations, additional SWPPP requirements, and pollutant specific monitoring to compare to benchmarks that help determine overall effectiveness of stormwater control measures.

Exceedances of benchmarks are not considered permit violations, but are indicators that could identify a problem at the site with exposed pollutant sources or storm control measures that aren't working correctly. Operators that exceed benchmark thresholds may be required to evaluate the effectiveness of facility stormwater control measures through defined sequential and stepwise follow-up responses referred to as Additional Implementation Measures (AIM) responses. AIM requirements keep follow-up actions for benchmark exceedances clear, timely, and proportional to exceedance frequency and duration.

Currently EPA's MSGP provides coverage to permittees in Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Mexico, and the District of Columbia, as well as additional US territories and tribal lands. However, most states with NPDES program authorization develop their own MSGP using EPA's MSGP as a starting point.

For more information regarding MSGPs, please visit: <https://www.epa.gov/npdes/stormwater-discharges-industrial-activities-epas-2021-msgp>