United States Environmental Protection Agency
Office of Water (4303T) Washington, DC 20460
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EPA Fact Sheet

Proposed Effluent Guidelines Plan

Summary

EPA is proposing a plan and schedule for developing and revising effluent guidelines. These regulations will improve water quality by controlling discharges from industrial sources.

Background on Effluent Guidelines Plan

EPA publishes an Effluent Guidelines Plan every other year. The Plan is required by Section 304(m) of the Clean Water Act (CWA).

Background on Effluent Guidelines

Effluent guidelines are national regulations that control the discharge of pollutants to surface waters and to publicly owned treatment works (POTWs). Effluent guidelines are specific to an industry. EPA writes effluent guidelines for all types of industrial discharges -- from manufacturing, agricultural, and service industries.

The effluent guidelines program is one of EPA's most successful environmental protection programs. Effluent guidelines have helped reverse the water quality degradation that accompanied industrialization in this country. These regulations reduce the discharge of pollutants that have serious environmental impacts, including pollutants that:

- kill or impair fish and other aquatic organisms;
- cause health problems through contaminated water, fish, or shellfish; and
- degrade aquatic ecosystems

EPA has already issued effluent guidelines for 55 industries. These regulations have prevented the discharge of more than 1.6 billion pounds of toxic pollutants each year.

Summary of Plan

This notice presents and seeks comment on EPA's proposed Effluent Guidelines Program Plan for 2002/2003. The proposed Plan describes the effluent guidelines program and the Agency's current effluent guidelines development efforts. It also gives a brief update on the status of EPA's draft "Strategy for National Clean Water Act Regulations" which EPA may use to develop future biennial plans.

Further Information

For additional information concerning this action, you can contact Pat Harrigan at (202) 566-1666 or Jan Matuszko at (202) 566-1035 at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Office of Water, Engineering and Analysis Division (4303T), 1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, D.C.; or you can send an e-mail to emails: harrigan.patricia@epa.gov or matuszko.jan@epa.gov. You can view or download the complete text of the Federal Register notice on the Internet at http://www.epa.gov/waterscience/guide/plan.html.