

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

WATER QUALITY STANDARDS

MONTANA WATER QUALITY ACT

**PERMITTING AND COMPLIANCE DIVISION
WATER PROTECTION BUREAU**

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TITLE 75
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
CHAPTER 5
WATER QUALITY

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Chapter Cross-References

The Municipal Revenue Bond Act of 1939, Title 7, ch. 7, part 44.
Metropolitan sanitary and storm sewer district, Title 7, ch. 13, part 1.
County water and sewer districts, Title 7, ch. 13, part 22.
Public sewer systems, Title 7, ch. 13, part 42.
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Part 1

General Provisions

75-5-101. Policy. It is the public policy of this state to:

(1) conserve water by protecting, maintaining, and improving the quality and potability of water for public water supplies, wildlife, fish and aquatic life, agriculture, industry, recreation, and other beneficial uses;

(2) provide a comprehensive program for the prevention, abatement, and control of water pollution.

History: En. Sec. 121, Ch. 197, L. 1967; amd. Sec. 1, Ch. 21, L. 1971; amd. Sec. 1, Ch. 455, L. 1975; R.C.M. 1947, 69-4801(1).

Cross-References

Right to clean and healthful environment, Art. II, sec. 3, Mont. Const.

Duty to maintain clean and healthful environment, Art. IX, sec. 1, Mont. Const.

75-5-102. Purpose - rights of action not abridged. (1) A purpose of this chapter is to provide additional and cumulative remedies to prevent, abate, and control the pollution of state waters.

(2) This chapter does not abridge or alter rights of action or remedies in equity or under the common law or statutory law, criminal or civil, nor does this chapter or an act done under it estop the state or a municipality or person, as owner of water rights or otherwise, in the exercise of his rights in equity or under the common law or statutory law to suppress nuisances or to abate pollution.

History: En. Sec. 17, Ch. 21, L. 1971; amd. Sec. 6, Ch. 506, L. 1973; amd. Sec. 67, Ch. 349, L. 1974; amd. Sec. 11, Ch. 455, L. 1975; R.C.M. 1947, 69-4823(4).

Cross-References

Indemnification against loss to environment, Title 15, ch. 38.

75-5-103. Definitions. Unless the context requires otherwise, in this chapter, the following definitions apply:

(1) "Board" means the board of environmental review provided for in 2-15-3502.

(2) "Contamination" means impairment of the quality of state waters by sewage, industrial wastes, or other wastes, creating a hazard to human health.

(3) "Council" means the water pollution control advisory council provided for in 2-15-2107.

(4) (a) "Currently available data" means data that is readily available to the department at the time a decision is made, including information supporting its previous lists of water bodies that are threatened or impaired.

(b) The term does not mean new data to be obtained as a result of department efforts.

(5) "Degradation" means a change in water quality that lowers the quality of high-quality waters for a parameter. The term does not include those changes in water quality determined to be nonsignificant pursuant to 75-5-301(5)(c).

(6) "Department" means the department of environmental quality provided for in 2-15-3501.

(7) "Disposal system" means a system for disposing of sewage, industrial, or other wastes and includes sewage systems and treatment works.

(8) "Effluent standard" means a restriction or prohibition on quantities, rates, and concentrations of chemical, physical, biological, and other constituents that are discharged into state waters.

(9) "Existing uses" means those uses actually attained in state waters on or after July 1, 1971, whether or not those uses are included in the water quality standards.

(10) "High-quality waters" means all state waters, except:

(a) ground water classified as of January 1, 1995, within the "III" or "IV" classifications established by the board's classification rules; and

(b) surface waters that:

(i) are not capable of supporting any one of the designated uses for their classification;

or

(ii) have zero flow or surface expression for more than 270 days during most years.

(11) "Impaired water body" means a water body or stream segment for which sufficient credible data shows that the water body or stream segment is failing to achieve compliance with applicable water quality standards.

(12) "Industrial waste" means a waste substance from the process of business or industry or from the development of any natural resource, together with any sewage that may be present.

(13) "Interested person" means a person who has a real property interest, a water right, or an economic interest that is or may be directly and adversely affected by the department's preliminary decision regarding degradation of state waters, pursuant to 75-5-303. The term includes a person who has requested authorization to degrade high-quality waters.

(14) "Load allocation" means the portion of a receiving water's loading capacity that is allocated to one of its existing or future nonpoint sources or to natural background sources.

(15) "Loading capacity" means the mass of a pollutant that a water body can assimilate without a violation of water quality standards. For pollutants that cannot be measured in terms of mass, it means the maximum change that can occur from the best practicable condition in a surface water without causing a violation of the surface water quality standards.

(16) "Local department of health" means the staff, including health officers, employed by a county, city, city-county, or district board of health.

(17) "Metal parameters" includes but is not limited to aluminum, antimony, arsenic, beryllium, barium, cadmium, chromium, copper, fluoride, iron, lead, manganese, mercury, nickel, selenium, silver, thallium, and zinc.

(18) "Mixing zone" means an area established in a permit or final decision on nondegradation issued by the department where water quality standards may be exceeded, subject to conditions that are imposed by the department and that are consistent with the rules adopted by the board.

(19) "Other wastes" means garbage, municipal refuse, decayed wood, sawdust, shavings, bark, lime, sand, ashes, offal, night soil, oil, grease, tar, heat, chemicals, dead animals, sediment, wrecked or discarded equipment, radioactive materials, solid waste, and all other substances that may pollute state waters.

(20) "Outstanding resource waters" means:

(a) state surface waters located wholly within the boundaries of areas designated as national parks or national wilderness areas as of October 1, 1995; or

(b) other surface waters or ground waters classified by the board under the provisions of 75-5-316 and approved by the legislature.

(21) "Owner or operator" means a person who owns, leases, operates, controls, or supervises a point source.

(22) "Parameter" means a physical, biological, or chemical property of state water when a value of that property affects the quality of the state water.

(23) "Person" means the state, a political subdivision of the state, institution, firm, corporation, partnership, individual, or other entity and includes persons resident in Canada.

(24) "Point source" means a discernible, confined, and discrete conveyance, including but not limited to any pipe, ditch, channel, tunnel, conduit, well, discrete fissure, container, rolling stock, or vessel or other floating craft, from which pollutants are or may be discharged.

(25) (a) "Pollution" means:

(i) contamination or other alteration of the physical, chemical, or biological properties of state waters that exceeds that permitted by Montana water quality standards, including but not limited to standards relating to change in temperature, taste, color, turbidity, or odor; or

(ii) the discharge, seepage, drainage, infiltration, or flow of liquid, gaseous, solid, radioactive, or other substance into state water that will or is likely to create a nuisance or render the waters harmful, detrimental, or injurious to public health, recreation, safety, or welfare, to livestock, or to wild animals, birds, fish, or other wildlife.

(b) A discharge, seepage, drainage, infiltration, or flow that is authorized under the pollution discharge permit rules of the board is not pollution under this chapter. Activities conducted under the conditions imposed by the department in short-term authorizations pursuant to 75-5-308 are not considered pollution under this chapter.

(26) "Sewage" means water-carried waste products from residences, public buildings, institutions, or other buildings, including discharge from human beings or animals, together with ground water infiltration and surface water present.

(27) "Sewage system" means a device for collecting or conducting sewage, industrial wastes, or other wastes to an ultimate disposal point.

(28) "Standard of performance" means a standard adopted by the board for the control of the discharge of pollutants that reflects the greatest degree of effluent reduction achievable through application of the best available demonstrated control technology, processes, operating methods, or other alternatives, including, when practicable, a standard permitting no discharge of pollutants.

(29) (a) "State waters" means a body of water, irrigation system, or drainage system, either surface or underground.

(b) The term does not apply to:

(i) ponds or lagoons used solely for treating, transporting, or impounding pollutants; or

(ii) irrigation waters or land application disposal waters when the waters are used up within the irrigation or land application disposal system and the waters are not returned to state waters.

(30) "Sufficient credible data" means chemical, physical, or biological monitoring data, alone or in combination with narrative information, that supports a finding as to whether a water body is achieving compliance with applicable water quality standards.

(31) "Threatened water body" means a water body or stream segment for which sufficient credible data and calculated increases in loads show that the water body or stream segment is fully supporting its designated uses but threatened for a particular designated use because of:

(a) proposed sources that are not subject to pollution prevention or control actions required by a discharge permit, the nondegradation provisions, or reasonable land, soil, and water conservation practices; or

(b) documented adverse pollution trends.

(32) "Total maximum daily load" or "TMDL" means the sum of the individual waste load allocations for point sources and load allocations for both nonpoint sources and natural

background sources established at a level necessary to achieve compliance with applicable surface water quality standards.

(33) "Treatment works" means works, including sewage lagoons, installed for treating or holding sewage, industrial wastes, or other wastes.

(34) "Waste load allocation" means the portion of a receiving water's loading capacity that is allocated to one of its existing or future point sources.

(35) "Water quality protection practices" means those activities, prohibitions, maintenance procedures, or other management practices applied to point and nonpoint sources designed to protect, maintain, and improve the quality of state waters. Water quality protection practices include but are not limited to treatment requirements, standards of performance, effluent standards, and operating procedures and practices to control site runoff, spillage or leaks, sludge or water disposal, or drainage from material storage.

(36) "Water well" means an excavation that is drilled, cored, bored, washed, driven, dug, jetted, or otherwise constructed and intended for the location, diversion, artificial recharge, or acquisition of ground water.

(37) "Watershed advisory group" means a group of individuals who wish to participate in an advisory capacity in revising and reprioritizing the list of water bodies developed under 75-5-702 and in the development of TMDLs under 75-5-703, including those groups or individuals requested by the department to participate in an advisory capacity as provided in 75-5-704.

History: En. Sec. 122, Ch. 197, L. 1967; amd. Sec. 2, Ch. 21, L. 1971; amd. Sec. 1, Ch. 506, L. 1973; amd. Sec. 59, Ch. 349, L. 1974; amd. Sec. 2, Ch. 455, L. 1975; amd. Sec. 3, Ch. 308, L. 1977; amd. Sec. 1, Ch. 444, L. 1977; R.C.M. 1947, 69-4802; amd. Sec. 1, Ch. 337, L. 1993; amd. Sec. 1, Ch. 340, L. 1993; amd. Sec. 1, Ch. 595, L. 1993; amd. Sec. 184, Ch. 418, L. 1995; amd. Sec. 1, Ch. 495, L. 1995; amd. Sec. 3, Ch. 497, L. 1995; amd. Sec. 1, Ch. 501, L. 1995; amd. Secs. 524, 568, Ch. 546, L. 1995; amd. Sec. 1, Ch. 541, L. 1997.

75-5-104. Special applicability. This chapter applies to drainage or seepage from all sources, including that from artificial, privately owned ponds or lagoons, if such drainage or seepage may reach other state waters in a condition which may pollute the other state waters.

History: En. Sec. 124, Ch. 197, L. 1967; amd. Sec. 3, Ch. 21, L. 1971; R.C.M. 1947, 69-4804.

Cross-References

Waters property of state, Art. IX, sec. 3, Mont. Const.

75-5-105. Confidentiality of records. Except as provided in 80-15-108, any information concerning sources of pollution which is furnished to the board or department or which is obtained by either of them is a matter of public record and open to public use. However, any information unique to the owner or operator of a source of pollution which would, if disclosed, reveal methods or processes entitled to protection as trade secrets shall be maintained as confidential if so determined by a court of competent jurisdiction. The owner or operator shall file a declaratory judgment action to establish the existence of a trade secret if he wishes such information to enjoy confidential status. The department shall be served in any such action and may intervene as a party therein. Any information not intended to be public when submitted to the board or department shall be submitted in writing and clearly marked as confidential. The data describing physical and chemical characteristics of a waste discharged to state waters shall not be considered confidential. The board may use any information in compiling or publishing analyses or summaries relating to water pollution if such analyses or

summaries do not identify any owner or operator of a source of pollution or reveal any information which is otherwise made confidential by this section.

History: En. Sec. 16, Ch. 21, L. 1971; amd. Sec. 10, Ch. 455, L. 1975; R.C.M. 1947, 69-4822; amd. Sec. 25, Ch. 668, L. 1989.

Cross-References

Right of privacy, Art. II, sec. 10, Mont. Const.
Uniform Declaratory Judgments Act, Title 27, ch. 8.
Uniform Trade Secrets Act, Title 30, ch. 14, part 4.

75-5-106. Interagency cooperation - enforcement authorization. (1) The council, board, and department may require the use of records of all state agencies and may seek the assistance of the agencies. When the department's review of a permit application submitted under another chapter or title is required or requested, the department shall coordinate the review under this chapter with the review conducted by the agency or unit under the other chapter, following the time schedule for that review. State, county, and municipal officers and employees, including sanitarians and other employees of local departments of health, shall cooperate with the council, board, and department in furthering the purposes of this chapter, so far as is practicable and consistent with their other duties.

(2) The department may authorize a local water quality district established according to the provisions of Title 7, chapter 13, part 45, to enforce the provisions of this chapter and rules adopted under this chapter on a case-by-case basis. If a local water quality district requests the authorization, the local water quality district shall present appropriate documentation to the department that a person is violating permit requirements established by the department or may be causing pollution, as defined in 75-5-103, of state waters or placing or causing to be placed wastes in a location where they are likely to cause pollution of state waters. The board may adopt rules regarding the granting of enforcement authority to local water quality districts.

History: En. Sec. 21, Ch. 21, L. 1971; R.C.M. 1947, 69-4827; amd. Sec. 25, Ch. 357, L. 1991; amd. Sec. 4, Ch. 497, L. 1995.

Part 2

Administrative Agencies

75-5-201. Board rules authorized. (1) The board shall, subject to the provisions of 75-5-203, adopt rules for the administration of this chapter.

(2) The board's rules may include a fee schedule or system for assessment of administrative penalties as provided under 75-5-611.

History: En. Sec. 6, Ch. 21, L. 1971; amd. Sec. 2, Ch. 506, L. 1973; amd. Sec. 62, Ch. 349, L. 1974; amd. Sec. 5, Ch. 455, L. 1975; amd. Sec. 3, Ch. 444, L. 1977; R.C.M. 1947, 69-4808.2(1)(g); amd. Sec. 1, Ch. 504, L. 1993; amd. Sec. 11, Ch. 471, L. 1995.

Cross-References

Montana Administrative Procedure Act - adoption of rules, Title 2, ch. 4, part 3.
Local boards of health - powers and duties, 50-2-116.

75-5-202. Board hearings. The board shall hold hearings necessary for the proper administration of this chapter or, in the case of permit issuance hearings, delegate this function to the department.

History: En. Sec. 6, Ch. 21, L. 1971; amd. Sec. 2, Ch. 506, L. 1973; amd. Sec. 62, Ch. 3, L. 1974; amd. Sec. 5, Ch. 455, L. 1975; amd. Sec. 3, Ch. 444, L. 1977; R.C.M. 1947, 69-08.2(1)(f).

Cross-References

Montana Administrative Procedure Act - contested case hearings, Title 2, ch. 4, part 6.

75-5-203. State regulations no more stringent than federal regulations or guidelines. (1) After April 14, 1995, except as provided in subsections (2) through (5) or unless required by state law, the board may not adopt a rule to implement this chapter that is more stringent than the comparable federal regulations or guidelines that address the same circumstances. The board may incorporate by reference comparable federal regulations or guidelines.

(2) The board may adopt a rule to implement this chapter that is more stringent than comparable federal regulations or guidelines only if the board makes a written finding after a public hearing and public comment and based on evidence in the record that:

(a) the proposed state standard or requirement protects public health or the environment of the state; and

(b) the state standard or requirement to be imposed can mitigate harm to the public health or environment and is achievable under current technology.

(3) The written finding must reference information and peer-reviewed scientific studies contained in the record that forms the basis for the board's conclusion. The written finding must also include information from the hearing record regarding the costs to the regulated community that are directly attributable to the proposed state standard or requirement.

(4) (a) A person affected by a rule of the board adopted after January 1, 1990, and before April 14, 1995, that that person believes to be more stringent than comparable federal regulations or guidelines may petition the board to review the rule. If the board determines that the rule is more stringent than comparable federal regulations or guidelines, the board shall comply with this section by either revising the rule to conform to the federal regulations or guidelines or by making the written finding, as provided under subsection (2), within a reasonable period of time, not to exceed 12 months after receiving the petition. A petition under this section does not relieve the petitioner of the duty to comply with the challenged rule. The board may charge a petition filing fee in an amount not to exceed \$250.

(b) A person may also petition the board for a rule review under subsection (4)(a) if the board adopts a rule after January 1, 1990, in an area in which no federal regulations or guidelines existed and the federal government subsequently establishes comparable regulations or guidelines that are less stringent than the previously adopted board rule.

(5) This section does not apply to a rule adopted under the emergency rulemaking provisions of 2-4-303(1).

History: En. Sec. 1, Ch. 471, L. 1995.

75-5-204 through 75-5-210 reserved.

75-5-211. Department to administer chapter. (1) Except as otherwise provided, the department is responsible for administration of this chapter.

(2) The department may use its personnel and those of the local departments of health as necessary to administer this chapter.

History: En. Sec. 125, Ch. 197, L. 1967; amd. Sec. 4, Ch. 21, L. 1971; amd. Sec. 60, Ch. 349, L. 1974; R.C.M. 1947, 69-4805.

Cross-References

Department of Public Health and Human Services - rules regarding water and sewage requirements for hotels, 50-51-103.

75-5-212. Department research and information. (1) The department shall:

- (a) collect and furnish information relating to the prevention and control of water pollution;
- (b) conduct or encourage necessary research and demonstrations concerning water pollution;
- (c) encourage and provide for the use of appropriate new methods, materials, and models in evaluation, design, and construction as they relate to water quality.

(2) (a) In the implementation of subsection (1)(a), the department shall, at intervals not to exceed 5 years, compile and when necessary, update department organizational information, statutes, rules, permitting information, standards, and bulletins related to water quality. The first compilation must be complete and made available in hard copy and for electronic access by January 31, 2000.

(b) The department may charge a reasonable fee for purchase of the hard-copy compilation, not to exceed the department's costs for copying, assembly, and distribution of the compilation.

History: En. Sec. 7, Ch. 21, L. 1971; amd. Sec. 3, Ch. 506, L. 1973; amd. Sec. 63, Ch. 349, L. 1974; amd. Sec. 6, Ch. 455, L. 1975; amd. Sec. 4, Ch. 444, L. 1977; R.C.M. 1947, 69-4809.1(1)(d), (1)(e); amd. Sec. 1, Ch. 511, L. 1999.

75-5-213. Comprehensive plan for prevention and control of water pollution. The department shall advise, consult, and cooperate with other states, other state and federal agencies, affected groups, political subdivisions, and industries in the formulation of a comprehensive plan to prevent and control pollution.

History: En. Sec. 7, Ch. 21, L. 1971; amd. Sec. 3, Ch. 506, L. 1973; amd. Sec. 63, Ch. 349, L. 1974; amd. Sec. 6, Ch. 455, L. 1975; amd. Sec. 4, Ch. 444, L. 1977; R.C.M. 1947, 69-4809.1(1)(h).

75-5-214 through 75-5-220 reserved.

75-5-221. Water pollution control advisory council - general. (1) The council provided for in 2-15-2107 shall select a presiding officer from among its members. The director of the department of environmental quality shall designate a member of the staff of the department to act as secretary to the council. The secretary shall keep records of all actions taken by the council.

(2) Meetings must be held at the call of the presiding officer or on written request of two or more members.

(3) Each member may, by filing with the secretary, designate a deputy or alternate to perform the member's duties.

(4) The council shall act only in an advisory capacity to the department on matters relating to water pollution.

(5) The director of the department may designate other persons to participate with council members in evaluating particular issues arising under this chapter that are brought before the council.

History: En. Sec. 132, Ch. 197, L. 1967; amd. Sec. 10, Ch. 21, L. 1971; amd. Sec. 64, Ch. 349, L. 1974; R.C.M. 1947, 69-4812; amd. Sec. 1, Ch. 297, L. 1995; amd. Sec. 185, Ch. 418, L. 1995.

Part 3

Classification and Standards

Part Cross-References

Energy emergency - power of Governor to suspend pollution control standards, 90-4-310.

75-5-301. Classification and standards for state waters. Consistent with the provisions of 80-15-201 and this chapter, the board shall:

(1) establish the classification of all state waters in accordance with their present and future most beneficial uses, creating an appropriate classification for streams that, due to sporadic flow, do not support an aquatic ecosystem that includes salmonid or nonsalmonid fish;

(2) (a) formulate and adopt standards of water quality, giving consideration to the economics of waste treatment and prevention. When rules are adopted regarding temporary standards, they must conform with the requirements of 75-5-312.

(b) Standards adopted by the board must meet the following requirements:

(i) for carcinogens, the water quality standard for protection of human health must be the value associated with an excess lifetime cancer risk level, assuming continuous lifetime exposure, not to exceed 1×10^{-3} in the case of arsenic and 1×10^{-5} for other carcinogens. However, if a standard established at a risk level of 1×10^{-3} for arsenic or 1×10^{-5} for other carcinogens violates the maximum contaminant level obtained from 40 CFR, part 141, then the maximum contaminant level must be adopted as the standard for that carcinogen.

(ii) standards for the protection of aquatic life do not apply to ground water.

(3) review, from time to time at intervals of not more than 3 years and, to the extent permitted by this chapter, revise established classifications of waters and adopted standards of water quality;

(4) adopt rules governing the granting of mixing zones, requiring that mixing zones granted by the department be specifically identified and requiring that mixing zones have:

(a) the smallest practicable size;

(b) a minimum practicable effect on water uses; and

(c) definable boundaries;

(5) adopt rules implementing the nondegradation policy established in 75-5-303, including but not limited to rules that:

(a) provide a procedure for department review and authorization of degradation;

(b) establish criteria for the following:

(i) determining important economic or social development; and

(ii) weighing the social and economic importance to the public of allowing the proposed project against the cost to society associated with a loss of water quality;

(c) establish criteria for determining whether a proposed activity or class of activities, in addition to those activities identified in 75-5-317, will result in nonsignificant changes in water quality for any parameter in order that those activities are not required to undergo review under 75-5-303(3). These criteria must be established in a manner that generally:

(i) equates significance with the potential for harm to human health, a beneficial use, or the environment;

(ii) considers both the quantity and the strength of the pollutant;

(iii) considers the length of time the degradation will occur;

(iv) considers the character of the pollutant so that greater significance is associated with carcinogens and toxins that bioaccumulate or biomagnify and lesser significance is associated with substances that are less harmful or less persistent.

(d) provide that changes of nitrate as nitrogen in ground water are nonsignificant if the discharge will not cause degradation of surface water and the predicted concentration of nitrate as nitrogen at the boundary of the ground water mixing zone does not exceed:

(i) 7.5 milligrams per liter from sources other than sewage;

(ii) 5.0 milligrams per liter from sewage discharged from a system that does not use level two treatment in an area where the ground water nitrate as nitrogen is 5.0 milligrams per liter or less;

(iii) 7.5 milligrams per liter from sewage discharged from a system using level two treatment, which must be defined in the rules; or

(iv) 7.5 milligrams per liter from sewage discharged from a system in areas where the ground water nitrate as nitrogen level exceeds 5.0 milligrams per liter primarily from sources other than human waste.

(6) to the extent practicable, ensure that the rules adopted under subsection (5) establish objective and quantifiable criteria for various parameters. These criteria must, to the extent practicable, constitute guidelines for granting or denying applications for authorization to degrade high-quality waters under the policy established in 75-5-303(2) and (3).

(7) adopt rules to implement this section.

History: En. Sec. 6, Ch. 21, L. 1971; amd. Sec. 2, Ch. 506, L. 1973; amd. Sec. 62, Ch. 349, L. 1974; amd. Sec. 5, Ch. 455, L. 1975; amd. Sec. 3, Ch. 444, L. 1977; R.C.M. 1947, 69-4808.2(part); amd. Sec. 26, Ch. 668, L. 1989; amd. Sec. 2, Ch. 595, L. 1993; (7)En. Sec. 5, Ch. 595, L. 1993; amd. Sec. 5, Ch. 497, L. 1995; amd. Sec. 4, Ch. 501, L. 1995; amd. Sec. 1, Ch. 539, L. 1995; amd. Sec. 1, Ch. 40, L. 1997; amd. Sec. 5, Ch. 195, L. 1999; amd. Sec. 1, Ch. 588, L. 1999.

Cross-References

Montana Administrative Procedure Act - adoption of rules, Title 2, ch. 4, part 3.

75-5-302. Revised classifications not to lower water quality standards - exception.

(1) Except as provided in subsection (2), in revising classifications or standards or in adopting new classifications or standards, the board may not formulate standards of water quality or classify state water in a manner that lowers the water quality standard applicable to state water below the level applicable under the classifications and standards adopted unless the board finds that a particular state water has been classified under a standard or classification of water quality that is higher than the actual water quality that existed at the time of classification and only if the action is taken pursuant to 75-5-307. When the board or department is presented with facts indicating that a body of water is misclassified, the board shall, within 90 days, initiate rulemaking to correct the misclassification.

(2) Establishment of a temporary water quality standard or classification does not require a finding that the affected state water was classified under a standard or classification that was higher than the actual water quality that existed at the time of the prior classification.

History: En. Sec. 6, Ch. 21, L. 1971; amd. Sec. 2, Ch. 506, L. 1973; amd. Sec. 62, Ch. 349, L. 1974; amd. Sec. 5, Ch. 455, L. 1975; amd. Sec. 3, Ch. 444, L. 1977; R.C.M. 1947, 69-4808.2(1)(c)(i); amd. Sec. 6, Ch. 497, L. 1995; amd. Sec. 2, Ch. 539, L. 1995.

75-5-303. Nondegradation policy. (1) Existing uses of state waters and the level of water quality necessary to protect those uses must be maintained and protected.

(2) Unless authorized by the department under subsection (3) or exempted from review under 75-5-317, the quality of high-quality waters must be maintained.

(3) The department may not authorize degradation of high-quality waters unless it has been affirmatively demonstrated by a preponderance of evidence to the department that:

(a) degradation is necessary because there are no economically, environmentally, and technologically feasible modifications to the proposed project that would result in no degradation;

(b) the proposed project will result in important economic or social development and that the benefit of the development exceeds the costs to society of allowing degradation of high-quality waters;

(c) existing and anticipated use of state waters will be fully protected; and

(d) the least degrading water quality protection practices determined by the department to be economically, environmentally, and technologically feasible will be fully implemented by the applicant prior to and during the proposed activity.

(4) The department shall issue a preliminary decision either denying or authorizing degradation and shall provide public notice and a 30-day comment period prior to issuing a final decision. The department's preliminary and final decisions must include:

(a) a statement of the basis for the decision; and

(b) a detailed description of all conditions applied to any authorization to degrade state waters, including, when applicable, monitoring requirements, required water protection practices, reporting requirements, effluent limits, designation of the mixing zones, the limits of degradation authorized, and methods of determining compliance with the authorization for degradation.

(5) An interested person wishing to challenge a final department decision may request a hearing before the board within 30 days of the final department decision. The contested case procedures of Title 2, chapter 4, part 6, apply to a hearing under this section.

(6) Periodically, but not more often than every 5 years, the department may review authorizations to degrade state waters. Following the review, the department may, after timely notice and opportunity for hearing, modify the authorization if the department determines that an economically, environmentally, and technologically feasible modification to the development exists. The decision by the department to modify an authorization may be appealed to the board.

(7) The board may not issue an authorization to degrade state waters that are classified as outstanding resource waters.

(8) The board shall adopt rules to implement this section.

History: En. Sec. 6, Ch. 21, L. 1971; amd. Sec. 2, Ch. 506, L. 1973; amd. Sec. 62, Ch. 349, L. 1974; amd. Sec. 5, Ch. 455, L. 1975; amd. Sec. 3, Ch. 444, L. 1977; R.C.M. 1947, 69-4808.2(1)(c)(ii), (1)(c)(iii); amd. Sec. 3, Ch. 595, L. 1993; (7) En. Sec. 5, Ch. 595, L. 1993; amd. Sec. 2, Ch. 495, L. 1995; amd. Sec. 5, Ch. 501, L. 1995.

Cross-References

Outstanding resource water classification, 75-5-316.

Nonsignificant activities, 75-5-317.

Action for damage to water supply caused by metal mining operation, 82-4-355.

75-5-304. Adoption of standards - pretreatment, effluent, performance. (1) The board shall:

(a) adopt pretreatment standards for wastewater discharged into a municipal disposal system;

(b) adopt effluent standards as defined in 75-5-103;

(c) adopt toxic effluent standards and prohibitions; and

(d) establish standards of performance for new point source discharges.

(2) In taking action under subsection (1), the board shall ensure that the standards are cost-effective and economically, environmentally, and technologically feasible.

History: En. Sec. 6, Ch. 21, L. 1971; amd. Sec. 2, Ch. 506, L. 1973; amd. Sec. 62, Ch. 349, L. 1974; amd. Sec. 5, Ch. 455, L. 1975; amd. Sec. 3, Ch. 444, L. 1977; R.C.M. 1947, 69-4808.2(1)(h); amd. Sec. 7, Ch. 497, L. 1995.

75-5-305. Adoption of requirements for treatment of wastes - variance procedure - appeals. (1) The board may establish minimum requirements for the treatment of wastes. For cases in which the federal government has adopted technology-based treatment requirements for a particular industry or activity in 40 CFR, chapter I, subchapter N, the board shall adopt those requirements by reference. To the extent that the federal government has not adopted minimum treatment requirements for a particular industry or activity, the board may do so, through rulemaking, for parameters likely to affect beneficial uses, ensuring that the requirements are cost-effective and economically, environmentally, and technologically feasible. Except for the technology-based treatment requirements set forth in 40 CFR, chapter I, subchapter N, minimum treatment may not be required to address the discharge of a parameter when the discharge is considered nonsignificant under rules adopted pursuant to 75-5-301.

(2) The board shall establish minimum requirements for the control and disposal of sewage from private and public buildings, including standards and procedures for variances from the requirements.

(3) An applicant for a variance from minimum requirements adopted by a local board of health pursuant to 50-2-116(1)(i) may appeal the local board of health's final decision to the department by submitting a written request for a hearing within 30 days after the decision. The written request must describe the activity for which the variance is requested, include copies of all documents submitted to the local board of health in support of the variance, and specify the reasons for the appeal of the local board of health's final decision.

(4) The department shall conduct a hearing on the request pursuant to Title 2, chapter 4, part 6. Within 30 days after the hearing, the department shall grant, conditionally grant, or deny the variance. The department shall base its decision on the board's standards for a variance.

(5) A decision of the department pursuant to subsection (4) is appealable to district court under the provisions of Title 2, chapter 4, part 7.

History: En. Sec. 6, Ch. 21, L. 1971; amd. Sec. 2, Ch. 506, L. 1973; amd. Sec. 62, Ch. 349, L. 1974; amd. Sec. 5, Ch. 455, L. 1975; amd. Sec. 3, Ch. 444, L. 1977; R.C.M. 1947, 69-4808.2(2)(b); amd. Sec. 1, Ch. 479, L. 1991; amd. Sec. 8, Ch. 497, L. 1995.

75-5-306. Purer than natural unnecessary - dams. (1) It is not necessary that wastes be treated to a purer condition than the natural condition of the receiving stream as long as the minimum treatment requirements established under this chapter are met.

(2) "Natural" refers to conditions or material present from runoff or percolation over which man has no control or from developed land where all reasonable land, soil, and water conservation practices have been applied. Conditions resulting from the reasonable operation of dams at July 1, 1971, are natural.

History: En. Sec. 121, Ch. 197, L. 1967; amd. Sec. 1, Ch. 21, L. 1971; amd. Sec. 1, Ch. 455, L. 1975; R.C.M. 1947, 69-4801(2).

75-5-307. Hearings required for classification, formulation of standards, and rulemaking. (1) Before streams are classified or standards established or modified or rules made, revoked, or modified, the board shall hold a public hearing. Notice of the hearing specifying the waters concerned and the classification, standards, or modification of them and any rules proposed to be made, revoked, or modified shall be published at least once a week for 3 consecutive weeks in a daily newspaper of general circulation in the area affected. Notice shall also be mailed directly to persons the board believes may be affected by the proposed action. The council shall be given not less than 30 days prior to first publication to comment on the proposed action.

(2) At a hearing held under this section, the board shall give all interested persons reasonable opportunity to submit data, views, or arguments, orally or in writing. The board may make rules for the orderly conduct of the hearing but need not require compliance with the rules of evidence or procedure applicable to hearings held under 75-5-611.

History: En. Sec. 134, Ch. 197, L. 1967; amd. Sec. 12, Ch. 21, L. 1971; R.C.M. 1947, 69-4814.

Cross-References

Montana Administrative Procedure Act - rulemaking, 2-4-302.

75-5-308. Short-term water authorizations - water quality standards. (1) Because these activities promote the public interest, the department may, if necessary, authorize short-term exemptions from the water quality standards for the following activities:

(a) emergency remediation activities that have been approved, authorized, or required by the department; and

(b) application of a pesticide that is registered by the United States environmental protection agency pursuant to 7 U.S.C. 136(a) when it is used to control nuisance aquatic organisms or to eliminate undesirable and nonnative aquatic species.

(2) An authorization must include conditions that minimize, to the extent practicable, the magnitude of any change in the concentration of the parameters affected by the activity and the length of time during which any change may occur. The authorization must also include conditions that prevent significant risk to public health and that ensure that existing and designated uses of state water are protected and maintained upon completion of the activity. Authorizations issued under this section may include conditions that require water quality or quantity monitoring and reporting. In the performance of its responsibilities under this section, the department may negotiate operating agreements with other departments of state government that are intended to minimize duplication in review of activities eligible for authorizations under this section.

(3) An authorization to use a pesticide does not relieve a person from the duty to comply with Title 30, chapters 2 and 15. The department may not authorize an exemption from water

quality standards for an activity that requires a discharge permit under rules adopted by the board pursuant to 75-5-401.

History: En. Sec. 2, Ch. 340, L. 1993; amd. Sec. 2, Ch. 588, L. 1999.

75-5-309. Standards more stringent than federal standards. (1) In adopting rules to implement this chapter, the board may adopt rules that are more stringent than corresponding draft or final federal regulations, guidelines, or criteria if the board makes written findings, based on sound scientific or technical evidence in the record, which state that rules that are more stringent than corresponding federal regulations, guidelines, or criteria are necessary to protect the public health, beneficial use of water, or the environment of the state.

(2) The board's written findings must be accompanied by a board opinion referring to and evaluating the public health and environmental information and studies contained in the record that forms the basis for the board's conclusion.

History: En. Sec. 1, Ch. 497, L. 1995.

75-5-310. Site-specific standards of water quality for aquatic life.

(1) Notwithstanding any other provisions of this chapter and except as provided in subsection (2), the board, upon application by a permit applicant, permittee, or person potentially liable under any state or federal environmental remediation statute, shall adopt site-specific standards of water quality for aquatic life, both acute and chronic, as the standards of water quality required under 75-5-301(2) and (3). The site-specific standards of water quality must be developed in accordance with the procedures set forth in draft or final federal regulations, guidelines, or criteria.

(2) If the department, based upon its review of an application submitted under subsection (1) and sound scientific, technical, and available site-specific evidence, determines that the development of site-specific criteria in accordance with draft or final federal regulations, guidelines, or criteria would not be protective of beneficial uses, the department, within 90 days of the submission of an application under subsection (1), shall notify the applicant in writing of its determination and of all additional procedures that the applicant is required to comply with in the development of site-specific standards of water quality under this section. If there is a dispute between the department and the applicant as to the additional procedures, the board shall, on the request of the department or the applicant, hear and determine the dispute. The board's decision must be based on sound scientific, technical, and available site-specific evidence.

History: En. Sec. 2, Ch. 497, L. 1995.

75-5-311. Local water quality districts - board approval - local water quality programs. (1) A county that establishes a local water quality district according to the procedures specified in Title 7, chapter 13, part 45, shall, in consultation with the department, undertake planning and information-gathering activities necessary to develop a proposed local water quality program.

(2) A county may implement a local water quality program in a local water quality district if the program is approved by the board after a hearing conducted under 75-5-202.

(3) In approving a local water quality program, the board shall determine that the program is consistent with the purposes and requirements of Title 75, chapter 5, and that the program will be effective in protecting, preserving, and improving the quality of surface water and ground water, considering the administrative organization, staff, and financial and other resources available to implement the program.

(4) Subject to the board's approval, the commissioners and the governing bodies of cities and towns that participate in a local water quality district may adopt local ordinances to regulate the following specific facilities and sources of pollution:

- (a) onsite waste water disposal facilities;
- (b) storm water runoff from paved surfaces;
- (c) service connections between buildings and publicly owned sewer mains;
- (d) facilities that use or store halogenated and nonhalogenated solvents, including hazardous substances that are referenced in 40 CFR 261.31, United States environmental protection agency hazardous waste numbers F001 through F005, as amended; and
- (e) internal combustion engine lubricants.

(5) (a) For the facilities and sources of pollution included in subsection (4) and consistent with the provisions of subsection (6), the local ordinances may:

(i) be compatible with or more stringent or more extensive than the requirements imposed by 75-5-304, 75-5-305, and 75-5-401 through 75-5-404 and rules adopted under those sections to protect water quality, establish waste discharge permit requirements, and establish best management practices for substances that have the potential to pollute state waters;

(ii) provide for administrative procedures, administrative orders and actions, and civil enforcement actions that are consistent with 75-5-601 through 75-5-604, 75-5-611 through 75-5-616, 75-5-621, and 75-5-622 and rules adopted under those sections; and

(iii) provide for civil penalties not to exceed \$1,000 per violation, provided that each day of violation of a local ordinance constitutes a separate violation, and criminal penalties not to exceed \$500 per day of violation or imprisonment for not more than 30 days, or both.

(b) Board approval of an ordinance or local law that is more stringent than the comparable state law is subject to the provisions of 75-5-203.

(6) The local ordinances authorized by this section may not:

(a) duplicate the department's requirements and procedures relating to permitting of waste discharge sources and enforcement of water quality standards;

(b) regulate any facility or source of pollution to the extent that the facility or source is:

(i) required to obtain a permit or other approval from the department or federal government or is the subject of an administrative order, a consent decree, or an enforcement action pursuant to Title 75, chapter 5, part 4; Title 75, chapter 6; Title 75, chapter 10; the federal Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980, 42 U.S.C. 9601 through 9675, as amended; or federal environmental, safety, or health statutes and regulations;

(ii) exempted from obtaining a permit or other approval from the department because the facility or source is required to obtain a permit or other approval from another state agency or is the subject of an enforcement action by another state agency; or

(iii) subject to the provisions of Title 80, chapter 8 or chapter 15.

(7) If the boundaries of a district are changed after the board has approved the local water quality program for the district, the board of directors of the local water quality district shall submit a program amendment to the board and obtain the board's approval of the program amendment before implementing the local water quality program in areas that have been added to the district.

(8) The department shall monitor the implementation of local water quality programs to ensure that the programs are adequate to protect, preserve, and improve the quality of the surface water and ground water and are being administered in a manner consistent with the purposes and requirements of Title 75, chapter 5. If the department finds that a local water quality program is not adequate to protect, preserve, and improve the quality of the surface water and ground water or is not being administered in a manner consistent with the purposes and requirements of Title 75, chapter 5, the department shall report to the board.

(9) If the board determines that a local water quality program is inadequate to protect, preserve, and improve the quality of the surface water and ground water in the local water quality district or that the program is being administered in a manner inconsistent with Title 75, chapter 5, the board shall give notice and conduct a hearing on the matter.

(10) If after the hearing the board determines that the program is inadequate to protect, preserve, and improve the quality of the surface water and ground water in the local water quality district or that it is not being administered in a manner consistent with the purposes of Title 75, chapter 5, the board shall require that necessary corrective measures be taken within a reasonable time, not to exceed 60 days.

(11) If an ordinance adopted under this section conflicts with a requirement imposed by the department's water quality program, the department's requirement supersedes the local ordinance.

(12) If the board finds that, because of the complexity or magnitude of a particular water pollution source, the control of the source is beyond the reasonable capability of a local water quality district or may be more efficiently and economically performed at the state level, the board may direct the department to assume and retain control over the source. A charge may not be assessed against the local water quality district for that source. Findings made under this subsection may be based on the nature of the source involved or on the source's relationship to the size of the community in which it is located.

History: En. Sec. 24, Ch. 357, L. 1991; amd. Sec. 12, Ch. 471, L. 1995.

Cross-References

Pesticides, Title 80, ch. 8.

Montana Agricultural Chemical Ground Water Protection Act, Title 80, ch. 15.

75-5-312. Temporary water quality standards. (1) The board may on its own, upon recommendation of the department, or upon a petition for rulemaking by a person, including a permit applicant or permittee, temporarily modify a water quality standard for a specific water body or segment on a parameter-by-parameter basis in those instances in which substantive information indicates that the water body or segment is not supporting its designated uses. When the board adopts temporary standards, the goal is to improve water quality to the point at which an additional beneficial use or uses are supported.

(2) As a condition for establishing temporary water quality standards for a particular water body or segment, the department or the petitioner, as applicable, shall prepare a support document and implementation plan for use by the board in determining whether to adopt a proposed temporary water quality standard.

(3) If a person petitions for rulemaking under this section, the petition must specifically describe the affected state water, the existing ambient water quality for the parameter or parameters at issue, the water quality standard or standards affected, and the temporary modifications sought. Within 180 days after the board grants a petition to initiate rulemaking, the petitioner shall prepare and submit to the board and the department a proposed support document and implementation plan that sets forth:

(a) the water quality limiting factors affecting the water body or segment;

(b) the existing beneficial use or uses and the beneficial use or uses considered attainable in the absence of the water quality limiting factors;

(c) an implementation plan to eliminate the water quality limiting factors to the extent considered achievable; and

(d) a schedule for implementing the plan that ensures that the water quality standards for the parameter or parameters at issue are met as soon as reasonably practicable and in no event later than the time allowed by the board in the temporary standard.

(4) Upon the board's adoption of a temporary water quality standard, the department shall ensure that reasonable conditions and limitations designed to achieve compliance with the implementation plan are established in appropriate discharge permits.

(5) (a) A temporary modification of a water quality standard may not result in adverse impacts to existing beneficial uses or be established for a total period longer than 20 years.

(b) During the period of the temporary modification, the board may not allow a discharge that will cause overall water quality to become worse than the overall quality of the water body or segment prior to the discharge.

(6) If a state water is designated as having temporary standards, the department shall report to the board at least every 3 years or upon request of the board regarding whether adequate efforts have been made to implement the plans submitted as the basis for the temporary standard.

(7) The board shall review temporary standards at least every 3 years at a public hearing for which notice and an opportunity for comment have been provided. The board may terminate the temporary standard based on information submitted at the time of its review that the applicant is not complying with the approved implementation plan.

(8) The board shall terminate a temporary standard for a parameter if:

(a) values for the modified parameter or parameters improve to conditions that support all designated uses for that classification;

(b) the state water for which the temporary standard is adopted is reclassified as provided for in 75-5-302; or

(c) the plan submitted in support of the temporary water quality standard is not being implemented according to the plan's schedule or modifications to that schedule made by the board or department.

(9) The board may modify the plan if the permittee submits convincing evidence to the board that the plan needs modification. The board may not extend the plan beyond a total period of 20 years.

(10) If a temporary standard for a parameter in a particular state water is terminated because the plan submitted in support of the temporary water quality standard is not being implemented according to the plan's schedule or modifications to that schedule made by the board or department, a person may request a new temporary standard by submitting both a petition for rulemaking and a plan that meet the requirements of subsections (2) and (3). However, the board may not adopt another temporary standard for the parameter in the state water that would cumulatively be in effect for a total period longer than 20 years for the parameter in the state water.

History: En. Sec. 3, Ch. 539, L. 1995.

75-5-313 and 75-5-314 reserved.

75-5-315. Outstanding resource waters - statement of purpose. (1) The legislature, understanding the requirements of applicable federal law and the uniqueness of Montana's water resource, recognizes that certain state waters are of such environmental, ecological, or economic value that the state should prohibit, to the greatest extent practicable, changes to the existing water quality of those waters. Outstanding resource waters must be afforded the greatest protection feasible under state law, after thorough examination.

(2) The purpose of 75-5-316 and this section is to provide this protection and to provide guidance to the board in establishing rules to accomplish that level of protection.

History: En. Sec. 2, Ch. 501, L. 1995.

75-5-316. Outstanding resource water classification - rules - criteria - limitations - procedure. (1) As provided under the provisions of 75-5-301 and this section, the board may adopt rules regarding the classification of waters as outstanding resource waters.

(2) The department may not:

(a) grant an authorization to degrade under 75-5-303 in outstanding resource waters; or

(b) allow a new or increased point source discharge that would result in a permanent change in the water quality of an outstanding resource water.

(3) (a) A person may petition the board for rulemaking to classify waters as outstanding resource waters. The board shall initially review a petition against the criteria identified in subsection (3)(c) to determine whether the petition contains sufficient credible information for the board to accept the petition.

(b) The board may reject a petition without further review if it determines that the petition does not contain the sufficient credible information required by subsection (3)(a). If the board rejects a petition under this subsection (3)(b), it shall specify in writing the reasons for the rejection and the petition's deficiencies.

(c) The board may not adopt a rule classifying state waters as outstanding resource waters until it accepts a petition and finds that, based on a preponderance of the evidence:

(i) the waters identified in the petition constitute an outstanding resource based on the criteria provided in subsection (4);

(ii) the classification is necessary to protect the outstanding resource identified under subsection (3)(a); and

(iii) there is no other effective process available that will achieve the necessary protection.

(4) The board shall consider the following criteria in determining whether certain state waters are outstanding resource waters. However, the board may determine that compliance with one or more of these criteria is insufficient to warrant classification of the water as an outstanding resource water. The board shall consider:

(a) whether the waters have been designated as wild and scenic;

(b) the presence of endangered or threatened species in the waters;

(c) the presence of an outstanding recreational fishery in the waters;

(d) whether the waters provide the only source of suitable water for a municipality or industry;

(e) whether the waters provide the only source of suitable water for domestic water supply; and

(f) other factors that indicate outstanding environmental or economic values not specifically mentioned in this subsection (4).

(5) After acceptance of a petition, the board shall require the preparation of an environmental impact statement, as provided under Title 75, chapter 1, part 2, when classification as an outstanding resource water may cause significant adverse impacts to the environment, including significant adverse impacts to social or economic values.

(6) The board shall consult with other relevant state agencies when reviewing outstanding resource water classification petitions.

(7) (a) In accordance with 2-4-315, the board may deny an accepted outstanding resource water classification petition if it finds that:

(i) the requirements of subsection (3) have not been met; or

(ii) based on information available to the board from the environmental impact statement or otherwise, approving the outstanding resource waters classification petition would cause significant adverse environmental, social, or economic impacts.

(b) If the board denies the petition, it shall identify its reasons for petition denial.

(8) A rule classifying state waters as outstanding resource waters under this section may be adopted but is not effective until approved by the legislature.

(9) The board may not postpone or deny an application for an authorization to degrade state waters under 75-5-303 based on pending:

(a) board action on an outstanding resource water classification petition regarding those waters; or

(b) legislative approval of board action designating those waters as outstanding resource waters.

History: En. Sec. 3, Ch. 501, L. 1995; amd. Sec. 3, Ch. 588, L. 1999.

Cross-References

Nondegradation policy, 75-5-303.

75-5-317. Nonsignificant activities. (1) The categories or classes of activities identified in subsection (2) cause changes in water quality that are nonsignificant because of their low potential for harm to human health or the environment and their conformance with the guidance found in 75-5-301(5)(c).

(2) The following categories or classes of activities are not subject to the provisions of 75-5-303:

(a) existing activities that are nonpoint sources of pollution as of April 29, 1993;

(b) activities that are nonpoint sources of pollution initiated after April 29, 1993, when reasonable land, soil, and water conservation practices are applied and existing and anticipated beneficial uses will be fully protected;

(c) use of agricultural chemicals in accordance with a specific agricultural chemical ground water management plan promulgated under 80-15-212, if applicable, or in accordance with an environmental protection agency-approved label and when existing and anticipated uses will be fully protected;

(d) changes in existing water quality resulting from an emergency or remedial activity that is designed to protect public health or the environment and is approved, authorized, or required by the department;

(e) changes in existing ground water quality resulting from treatment of a public water supply system, as defined in 75-6-102, or a public sewage system, as defined in 75-6-102, by chlorination or other similar means that is designed to protect the public health or the environment and that is approved, authorized, or required by the department;

(f) the use of drilling fluids, sealants, additives, disinfectants, and rehabilitation chemicals in water well or monitoring well drilling, development, or abandonment, if used according to department-approved water quality protection practices and if no discharge to surface water will occur;

(g) short-term changes in existing water quality resulting from activities authorized by the department pursuant to 75-5-308;

(h) land application of animal waste, domestic septage, or waste from public sewage treatment systems containing nutrients when the wastes are applied to the land in a beneficial manner, application rates are based on agronomic uptake of applied nutrients, and other parameters will not cause degradation;

(i) incidental leakage of water from a public water supply system, as defined in 75-6-102, or from a public sewage system, as defined in 75-6-102, utilizing best practicable control technology designed and constructed in accordance with Title 75, chapter 6;

(j) discharges of water to ground water from water well or monitoring well tests, hydrostatic pressure and leakage tests, or wastewater from the disinfection or flushing of water mains and storage reservoirs, conducted in accordance with department-approved water quality protection practices.

(k) oil and gas drilling, production, abandonment, plugging, and restoration activities that do not result in discharges to surface water and that are performed in accordance with Title 82, chapter 10, or Title 82, chapter 11;

(l) short-term changes in existing water quality resulting from ordinary and everyday activities of humans or domesticated animals, including but not limited to:

(i) such recreational activities as boating, hiking, hunting, fishing, wading, swimming, and camping;

(ii) fording of streams or other bodies of water by vehicular or other means; and

(iii) drinking from or fording of streams or other bodies of water by livestock and other domesticated animals;

(m) coal and uranium prospecting that does not result in a discharge to surface water, that does not involve a test pit located in surface water or that may affect surface water, and that is performed in accordance with Title 82, chapter 4;

(n) solid waste management systems, motor vehicle wrecking facilities, and county motor vehicle graveyards licensed and operating in accordance with Title 75, chapter 10, part 2, or Title 75, chapter 10, part 5;

(o) hazardous waste management facilities permitted and operated in accordance with Title 75, chapter 10, part 4;

(p) metallic and nonmetallic mineral exploration that does not result in a discharge to surface water and that is permitted under and performed in accordance with Title 82, chapter 4, parts 3 and 4;

(q) stream-related construction projects or stream enhancement projects that result in temporary changes to water quality but do not result in long-term detrimental effects and that have been authorized pursuant to 75-5-318;

(r) diversions or withdrawals of water established and recognized under Title 85, chapter 2;

(s) the maintenance, repair, or replacement of dams, diversions, weirs, or other constructed works that are related to existing water rights and that are within wilderness areas so long as existing and anticipated beneficial uses are protected and as long as the changes in existing water quality relative to the project are short term; and

(t) any other activity that is nonsignificant because of its low potential for harm to human health or to the environment and its conformance with the guidance found in 75-5-301(5)(c).

History: En. Sec. 6, Ch. 501, L. 1995; amd. Sec. 4, Ch. 588, L. 1999.

Cross-References

Nondegradation policy, 75-5-303.

75-5-318. Short-term water quality standards for turbidity. (1) Upon authorization by the department or the department of fish, wildlife, and parks pursuant to subsection (4), the short-term water quality standards for total suspended sediment and turbidity resulting from stream-related construction activities or stream enhancement projects are the narrative standards for total suspended sediment adopted by the board under 75-5-301. If a short-term narrative standard is authorized under this section, the numeric standard for turbidity adopted by the board under 75-5-301 does not apply to the affected water body during the term of the narrative standard.

(2) The department shall review each application for short-term standards on a case-by-case basis to determine whether there are reasonable alternatives that preclude the need for a narrative standard. If the department determines that the numeric standard for turbidity adopted by the board under 75-5-301 cannot be achieved during the term of the activity and that there

are no reasonable alternatives to achieve the numeric standard, the department may authorize the use of a narrative standard for a specified term.

(3) Each authorization issued by the department must include conditions that minimize, to the extent practicable, the magnitude of any change in water quality and the length of time during which any change may occur. The authorization must also include site-specific conditions that ensure that the activity is not harmful, detrimental, or injurious to public health and the uses of state waters and that ensure that existing and designated beneficial uses of state water are protected and maintained upon completion of the activity. The department may not authorize short-term narrative standards for activities requiring a discharge permit under rules adopted by the board pursuant to 75-5-401. Authorizations issued under this section may include conditions that require water quality or quantity monitoring and reporting.

(4) In the performance of its responsibilities under this section, the department may negotiate operating agreements with other departments of state government that are intended to minimize duplication in review of activities eligible for authorizations under this section. The department of fish, wildlife, and parks may, in accordance with subsections (1), (2), and (3), authorize short-term water quality standards for total suspended sediment and turbidity for any stream construction project that it reviews under Title 75, chapter 7, part 1, or Title 87, chapter 5, part 5.

History: En. Sec. 5, Ch. 588, L. 1999.

Part 4

Permits

75-5-401. Board rules for permits - ground water exclusions. (1) Except as provided in subsection (5), the board shall adopt rules:

(a) governing application for permits to discharge sewage, industrial wastes, or other wastes into state surface waters and ground waters, including rules requiring the filing of plans and specifications relating to the construction, modification, or operation of disposal systems;

(b) governing the issuance, denial, modification, or revocation of permits. The board may not require a permit for a water conveyance structure or for a natural spring if the water discharged to state waters does not contain industrial waste, sewage, or other wastes. Discharge to surface water of ground water that is not altered from its ambient quality does not constitute a discharge requiring a permit under this part if:

(i) the discharge does not contain industrial waste, sewage, or other wastes;

(ii) the water discharged does not cause the receiving waters to exceed applicable standards for any parameters; and

(iii) to the extent that the receiving waters in their ambient state exceed standards for any parameters, the discharge does not increase the concentration of the parameters.

(2) The rules must allow the issuance or continuance of a permit only if the department finds that operation consistent with the limitations of the permit will not result in pollution of any state waters, except that the rules may allow the issuance of a temporary permit under which pollution may result if the department ensures that the permit contains a compliance schedule designed to meet all applicable effluent standards and water quality standards in the shortest reasonable period of time.

(3) The rules must provide that the department may revoke a permit if the department finds that the holder of the permit has violated its terms, unless the department also finds that the violation was accidental and unforeseeable and that the holder of the permit corrected the condition resulting in the violation as soon as was reasonably possible.

(4) The board may adopt rules governing reclamation of sites disturbed by construction, modification, or operation of permitted activities for which a bond is voluntarily filed by a permittee pursuant to 75-5-405, including rules for the establishment of criteria and procedures governing release of the bond or other surety and release of portions of a bond or other surety.

(5) Discharges of sewage, industrial wastes, or other wastes into state ground waters from the following activities or operations are not subject to the ground water permit requirements adopted under subsections (1) through (4):

(a) discharges or activities at wells injecting fluids associated with oil and gas exploration and production regulated under the federal underground injection control program;

(b) disposal by solid waste management systems licensed pursuant to 75-10-221;

(c) individuals disposing of their own normal household wastes on their own property;

(d) hazardous waste management facilities permitted pursuant to 75-10-406;

(e) water injection wells, reserve pits, and produced water pits used in oil and gas field operations and approved pursuant to Title 82, chapter 11;

(f) agricultural irrigation facilities;

(g) storm water disposal or storm water detention facilities;

(h) subsurface disposal systems for sanitary wastes serving individual residences;

(i) in situ mining of uranium facilities controlled under Title 82, chapter 4, part 2;

(j) mining operations subject to operating permits or exploration licenses in compliance with The Strip and Underground Mine Reclamation Act, Title 82, chapter 4, part 2, or the metal mine reclamation laws, Title 82, chapter 4, part 3; or

(k) projects reviewed under the provisions of the Montana Major Facility Siting Act, Title 75, chapter 20.

(6) Notwithstanding the provisions of 75-5-301(4), mixing zones for activities excluded from permit requirements under subsection (5) of this section must be established by the permitting agency for those activities in accordance with 75-5-301(4)(a) through (4)(c).

(7) Notwithstanding the exclusions set forth in subsection (5), any excluded source that the department determines may be causing or is likely to cause violations of ground water quality standards may be required to submit monitoring information pursuant to 75-5-602.

(8) The board may adopt rules identifying other activities or operations from which a discharge of sewage, industrial wastes, or other wastes into state ground waters is not subject to the ground water permit requirements adopted under subsections (1) through (4).

History: En. Sec. 6, Ch. 21, L. 1971; amd. Sec. 2, Ch. 506, L. 1973; amd. Sec. 62, Ch. 349, L. 1974; amd. Sec. 5, Ch. 455, L. 1975; amd. Sec. 3, Ch. 444, L. 1977; R.C.M. 1947, 69-4808.2(1)(d), (1)(e); amd. Sec. 1, Ch. 412, L. 1991; amd. Sec. 2, Ch. 297, L. 1995; amd. Sec. 9, Ch. 497, L. 1995; amd. Sec. 1, Ch. 582, L. 1995; amd. Sec. 6, Ch. 588, L. 1999.

Cross-References

Montana Administrative Procedure Act - adoption of rules, Title 2, ch. 4, part 3.

Department and Board permits required for facility siting, 75-20-211.

Dairy products manufacturing plant - approval of air pollutant control by Department of Environmental Quality, 81-22-403.

Mining permit denied if water pollution not prevented. 82-4-227.

Mining reclamation plan to include water pollution control. 82-4-231.

75-5-402. Duties of department. The department shall:

(1) issue, suspend, revoke, modify, or deny permits to discharge sewage, industrial wastes, or other wastes into state waters, consistently with rules made by the board;

(2) examine plans and other information needed to determine whether a permit should be issued or suggest changes in plans as a condition to the issuance of a permit;

(3) clearly specify in any permit any limitations imposed as to the volume, strength, and other significant characteristics of the waste to be discharged; and

(4) establish as conditions to the issuance of permits for which a performance bond or other surety is filed under 75-5-405 certain reclamation requirements sufficient to prevent pollution of state waters during and after operation of the project or activity for which a permit is issued.

History: En. Sec. 7, Ch. 21, L. 1971; amd. Sec. 3, Ch. 506, L. 1973; amd. Sec. 63, Ch. 349, L. 1974; amd. Sec. 6, Ch. 455, L. 1975; amd. Sec. 4, Ch. 444, L. 1977; R.C.M. 1947, 69-4809.1(1)(a) thru (1)(c); amd. Sec. 2, Ch. 412, L. 1991.

75-5-403. Denial or modification of permit - time for review of permit application.

(1) The department shall review for completeness all applications for new permits within 60 days of the receipt of the initial application and within 30 days of receipt of responses to notices of deficiencies. The initial completeness notice must note all major deficiency issues, based on the information submitted. The department and the applicant may extend these timeframes, by mutual agreement, by not more than 75 days. An application is considered complete unless the applicant is notified of a deficiency within the appropriate review period.

(2) If the department denies an application for a permit or modifies a permit, the department shall give written notice of its action to the applicant or holder and the applicant or holder may request a hearing before the board, in the manner stated in 75-5-611, for the purpose of petitioning the board to reverse or modify the action of the department. The hearing must be held within 30 days after receipt of written request. After the hearing, the board shall affirm, modify, or reverse the action of the department. If the holder does not request a hearing before the board, modification of a permit is effective 30 days after receipt of notice by the holder unless the department specifies a later date. If the holder does request a hearing before the board, an order modifying the permit is not effective until 20 days after receipt of notice of the action of the board.

History: En. Sec. 14, Ch. 21, L. 1971; amd. Sec. 4, Ch. 455, L. 1975; R.C.M. 1947, 69-4807.1(1); amd. Sec. 10, Ch. 497, L. 1995.

75-5-404. Suspension or revocation of permit - procedure. If the department suspends or revokes a permit because it has reason to believe that the holder has violated this chapter, the department may specify that the suspension or revocation is effective immediately if the department finds that the violation is likely to continue and will cause pollution, the harmful effects of which will not be remedied immediately on the cessation of the violation. Upon petition by the holder of the permit, the board shall grant the holder a hearing, to be conducted in the manner specified in 75-5-611, and shall issue an order affirming, modifying, or reversing the action of the department. The order of the board shall be effective immediately unless the board directs otherwise.

History: En. Sec. 14, Ch. 21, L. 1971; amd. Sec. 4, Ch. 455, L. 1975; R.C.M. 1947, 69-4807.1(2).

75-5-405. Voluntary filing of performance bond - terms - hearing. (1) A person who holds or has applied for a permit pursuant to 75-5-401 may voluntarily file a performance bond or other surety with the department for an amount sufficient to enable the state to reclaim the land disturbed by the project or activity authorized by the permit in accordance with all permit requirements and as needed to prevent pollution of state waters.

(2) If the department determines that the bonding level does not represent the present cost of reclaiming the disturbed land according to the reclamation requirements specified in the permit and the present cost of preventing pollution of state waters, the department shall notify the permittee and the permittee may modify the amount of the bond to accurately reflect the present cost.

(3) The department may not release all or any portion of a performance bond or other surety filed pursuant to this section until reclamation of the disturbed land has been completed to the satisfaction of the department and the department has determined that pollution of state waters has not occurred. The department may initiate bond forfeiture proceedings if the permittee fails to satisfactorily reclaim the disturbed land or prevent pollution of state waters.

(4) The department may not release a bond or other surety filed pursuant to this section until the public has been provided an opportunity for a hearing.

History: En. Sec. 3, Ch. 412, L. 1991.

Part 5

Financial Provisions

75-5-501. Repealed. Sec. 8, Ch. 195, L. 1999.

History: En. Sec. 1, Ch. 165, L. 1969; amd. Sec. 61, Ch. 349, L. 1974; R.C.M. 1947, 69-4808.1.

75-5-502. Board authorized to accept loans and grants. The board may accept loans and grants from the federal government and other sources to carry out the provisions of this chapter.

History: En. Sec. 6, Ch. 21, L. 1971; amd. Sec. 2, Ch. 506, L. 1973; amd. Sec. 62, Ch. 349, L. 1974; amd. Sec. 5, Ch. 455, L. 1975; amd. Sec. 3, Ch. 444, L. 1977; R.C.M. 1947, 69-4808.2(2)(a).

75-5-503. Department authorized to accept loans and grants. The department may accept loans and grants from the federal government and other sources to carry out the provisions of this chapter.

History: En. Sec. 7, Ch. 21, L. 1971; amd. Sec. 3, Ch. 506, L. 1973; amd. Sec. 63, Ch. 349, L. 1974; amd. Sec. 6, Ch. 455, L. 1975; amd. Sec. 4, Ch. 444, L. 1977; R.C.M. 1947, 69-4809.1(2).

75-5-504 through 75-5-506 reserved.

75-5-507. Repealed. Sec. 82, Ch. 509, L. 1995.

History: En. Sec. 1, Ch. 600, L. 1991.

75-5-508 through 75-5-510 reserved.

75-5-511. Sewage system operators authorized to adopt charges and rates for users. (1) A municipality or other entity operating a sewage system may adopt a system of

charges and rates to assure that each recipient of treatment works services within the municipality's jurisdiction or service area will pay its proportionate share of the costs of operation, maintenance, and replacement of any treatment works facilities or services provided by the municipality or other entity.

(2) A municipality or other entity operating a sewage system may require industrial users of its treatment works to pay to the municipality or other entity that portion of the cost of construction of the treatment works which is allocable to the treatment of such industrial user's wastes. The department may determine whether the payment required of the industrial user for the portion of the cost of the construction of the treatment works is properly allocable to the treatment of the industrial user's wastes.

History: En. Sec. 14, Ch. 455, L. 1975; R.C.M. 1947, 69-4808.4(1), (2).

75-5-512. Uses allowed for revenues. A municipality or other entity operating a sewage system may retain the amounts of the revenues derived from the payment of costs by industrial users of its treatment works services and expend such revenues, together with interest thereon, for:

- (1) repayment to applicable agencies of government of any grants or loans made to the municipality or other entity operating a sewage system for construction of the treatment works;
- (2) future expansion and reconstruction of the treatment works; and
- (3) other municipal purposes.

History: En. Sec. 14, Ch. 455, L. 1975; R.C.M. 1947, 69-4808.4(3).

75-5-513. Sewage system operators to keep records - department's power to inspect and audit. A municipality or other entity operating sewage systems shall keep records, financial statements, and books regarding its rates and charges and amounts collected on account of its treatment works and how such revenues are allocated. The department may inspect such records, financial statements, and books, audit them or cause them to be audited at such intervals as deemed necessary.

History: En. Sec. 14, Ch. 455, L. 1975; R.C.M. 1947, 69-4808.4(4).

75-5-514. When board to establish rates and collect charges. (1) In the event a municipality or other entity operating sewage systems fails, neglects, or refuses when required by the department to adopt the system of charges and rates authorized by 75-5-511, the board may adopt a system of charges and rates as provided for in 75-5-511(1) and collect, administer, and apply such revenues for the purposes of 75-5-512.

(2) In lieu of proceeding in the manner set forth in subsection (1) of this section, the department may institute proceedings at law or in equity to enforce compliance with or restrain violations of 75-5-511 through 75-5-513.

History: En. Sec. 14, Ch. 455, L. 1975; R.C.M. 1947, 69-4808.4(5), (6).

75-5-515. Determination of costs payable by users. In determining the amount of treatment works costs to be paid by recipients of treatment works services, the municipality or other entity operating sewage systems or, if applicable, the board shall consider the strength, volume, types, and delivery flow rate characteristics of the waste; the nature, location, and type of treatment works; the receiving waters; and such other factors as deemed necessary.

History: En. 69-4808.5 by Sec. 15 Ch. 455, L. 1975; R.C.M. 1947, 69-4808.5.

75-5-516. Fees authorized for recovery - process - rulemaking. (1) The board shall by rule prescribe fees to be assessed by the department that are sufficient to cover the board's and department's documented costs, both direct and indirect, of:

(a) reviewing and acting upon an application for a permit, permit modification, permit renewal, certificate, license, or other authorization required by rule under 75-5-201 or 75-5-401;

(b) reviewing and acting upon a petition for a degradation allowance under 75-5-303;

(c) reviewing and acting upon an application for a permit, certificate, license, or other authorization for which an exclusion is provided by rule from the permitting requirements established under 75-5-401;

(d) enforcing the terms and conditions of a permit or authorization identified in subsections (1)(a) through (1)(c). If the permit or authorization is not issued, the department shall return this portion of any application fee to the applicant.

(e) conducting compliance inspections and monitoring effluent and ambient water quality; and

(f) preparing water quality rules or guidance documents.

(2) The rules promulgated by the board under this section must include:

(a) a fee on all applications for permits or authorizations, as identified in subsections (1)(a) through (1)(c), that recovers to the extent permitted by this subsection (2) the department's cost of reviewing and acting upon the applications. This fee may not be more than \$5,000 per discharge point for an application addressed under subsection (1), except that an application with multiple discharge points may be assessed a lower fee for those points according to board rule.

(b) an annual fee to be assessed according to the volume and concentration of waste discharged into state waters. The annual fee may not be more than \$3,000 per million gallons discharged per day on an annual average for any activity under permit or authorization, as described in subsection (1), except that:

(i) a permit or authorization with multiple discharge points may be assessed a lower fee for those points according to board rule; and

(ii) a facility that consistently discharges effluent at less than or equal to one-half of its effluent limitations and that is in compliance with other permit requirements, using the previous calendar year's discharge data, is entitled to a 25% reduction in its annual permit fee. Proportionate reductions of up to 25% of the permit fee may be given to facilities that consistently discharge effluent at levels between 50% and 100% of their effluent limitations. However, a new permittee is not eligible for a fee reduction in its first year of operation, and a permittee with a violation of any effluent limit during the previous calendar year is not eligible for a fee reduction for the following year.

(3) To the extent permitted under subsection (2)(b), the annual fee must be sufficient to pay the department's estimated cost of conducting all tasks described under subsection (1) after subtracting:

(a) the fees collected under subsection (2)(a);

(b) state general fund appropriations for functions administered under this chapter; and

(c) federal grants for functions administered under this chapter.

(4) For purposes of subsection (3), the department's estimated cost of conducting the tasks described under subsection (1) is the amount authorized by the legislature for the department's water quality discharge permit programs.

(5) If the applicant or holder fails to pay a fee assessed under this section or rules adopted under this section within 90 days after the date established by rule for fee payment, the department may:

(a) impose an additional assessment consisting of not more than 20% of the fee plus interest on the required fee computed as provided in 15-1-216; or

(b) suspend the permit or exclusion. The department may lift the suspension at any time up to 1 year after the suspension occurs if the holder has paid all outstanding fees, including all penalties, assessments, and interest imposed under subsection (5)(a).

(6) Fees collected pursuant to this section must be deposited in an account in the special revenue fund type pursuant to 75-5-517.

(7) The department shall give written notice to each person assessed a fee under this section of the amount of fee that is assessed and the basis for the department's calculation of the fee. This notice must be issued at least 30 days prior to the due date for payment of the assessment.

(8) A holder of or an applicant for a permit, certificate, or license may appeal the department's fee assessment to the board within 20 days after receiving written notice of the department's fee determination under subsection (7). The appeal to the board must include a written statement detailing the reasons that the permitholder or applicant considers the department's fee assessment to be erroneous or excessive.

(9) If part of the department's fee assessment is not in dispute in an appeal filed under subsection (8), the undisputed portion of the fee must be paid to the department upon written request of the department.

(10) The contested case provisions of the Montana Administrative Procedure Act, provided for in Title 2, chapter 4, part 6, apply to a hearing before the board under this section.

(11) A municipality may raise rates to cover costs associated with the fees prescribed in this section for a public sewer system without the hearing required in 69-7-111.

History: En. Sec. 1, Ch. 507, L. 1993; amd. Sec. 3, Ch. 297, L. 1995; amd. Sec. 6, Ch. 51, L. 1997; amd. Sec. 54, Ch. 427, L. 1999.

Cross-References

Adoption and publication of rules. Title 2, ch. 4, part 3.

75-5-517. Disposition of water quality permit fees. (1) All fees collected under 75-5-516 must be credited to an account in the state special revenue fund.

(2) Money in the account may be used only to pay the department's cost in implementing the functions described in 75-5-516(1).

History: En. Sec. 2, Ch. 507, L. 1993.

Part 6

Enforcement, Appeal, and Penalties

Part Cross-References

Action for damage to water supply caused by metal mining operation, 82-4-355.

75-5-601. Cleanup orders. (1) The department may issue an order to a person to clean up any material that the person or the person's employee, agent, or subcontractor has accidentally or purposely dumped, spilled, or otherwise deposited in or near state waters and that may pollute state waters.

(2) If a unit of state or local government, including but not limited to a local board of health, county commission, governing body of a municipality, or state agency, has granted a permit or license to a person to discharge waste or has otherwise authorized an activity that involves the placement of waste and the department has reason to believe that the waste is

causing or is likely to cause pollution of state waters, the department may issue an order to the unit of state or local government to take measures to ensure that the wastes causing or likely to cause the pollution are cleaned up.

(3) The department may include in an order issued to a county commission pursuant to subsection (2) a request that the commission create a sewer district in the geographic area affected by the order for the purpose of establishing a public sewer system in accordance with the petition and election procedures provided by 7-13-2204 and 7-13-2208 through 7-13-2214.

History: En. Sec. 7, Ch. 21, L. 1971; amd. Sec. 3, Ch. 506, L. 1973; amd. Sec. 63, Ch. 349, L. 1974; amd. Sec. 6, Ch. 455, L. 1975; amd. Sec. 4, Ch. 444, L. 1977; R.C.M. 1947, 69-4809.1(1)(f); amd. Sec. 1, Ch. 292, L. 1991; amd. Sec. 4, Ch. 297, L. 1995.

75-5-602. Power to require monitoring. In order to carry out the objectives of this chapter and to effectively monitor the discharge of sewage, industrial wastes, and other wastes into state waters, the department may require the owner or operator of any point source, or the owner or operator of any facility that discharges into a municipal sewage system and to which pretreatment standards promulgated under this chapter apply, to:

- (1) establish and maintain records;
- (2) make reports;
- (3) install, use, and maintain monitoring equipment or methods, including biological monitoring techniques;
- (4) sample effluents using specified monitoring methods at designated locations and intervals;
- (5) provide other information as may be reasonably required by the department.

History: En. 69-4809.2 by Sec. 4, Ch. 506, L. 1973; amd. Sec. 7, Ch. 455, L. 1975; R.C.M. 1947, 69-4809.2(1).

75-5-603. Power to inspect. The authorized representative of the department, upon presentation of his credentials, may at reasonable times enter upon any public or private property to:

- (1) investigate conditions relating to pollution of state waters or violations of permit conditions;
- (2) have access to and copy any records required under this chapter;
- (3) inspect any monitoring equipment or method required under 75-5-602(3); and
- (4) sample any effluents which the owner or operator of such source is required to sample under 75-5-602(4).

History: En. 69-4809.2 by Sec. 4, Ch. 506, L. 1973; amd. Sec. 7, Ch. 455, L. 1975; R.C.M. 1947, 69-4809.2(2).

Cross-References

Searches and seizures - right of private individual to be secure. Art. II, sec. 11, Mont. Const.

75-5-604. Information obtained to relate to standards. Any records, reports, or information obtained under 75-5-602 and 75-5-603 shall, in the case of effluent data, be related to any applicable effluent limitations, toxic, pretreatment, or new source performance standards.

History: En. 69-4809.2 by Sec. 4, Ch. 506, L. 1973; amd. Sec. 7, Ch. 455, L. 1975; R.C.M. 1947, 69-4809.2(3).

75-5-605. Prohibited activity. (1) It is unlawful to:

(a) cause pollution as defined in 75-5-103 of any state waters or to place or cause to be placed any wastes where they will cause pollution of any state waters. Any placement of materials that is authorized by a permit issued by any state or federal agency is not a placement of wastes within the prohibition of this subsection if the agency's permitting authority includes provisions for review of the placement of materials to ensure that it will not cause pollution of state waters.

(b) violate any provision set forth in a permit or stipulation, including but not limited to limitations and conditions contained in the permit;

(c) site and construct a sewage lagoon less than 500 feet from an existing water well;

(d) cause degradation of state waters without authorization pursuant to 75-5-303;

(e) violate any order issued pursuant to this chapter; or

(f) violate any provision of this chapter.

(2) Except for the permit exclusions identified in 75-5-401(5), it is unlawful to carry on any of the following activities without a current permit from the department:

(a) construct, modify, or operate a disposal system that discharges into any state waters;

(b) construct or use any outlet for the discharge of sewage, industrial wastes, or other wastes into any state waters; or

(c) discharge sewage, industrial wastes, or other wastes into any state waters.

History: En. Sec. 126, Ch. 197, L. 1967; amd. Sec. 5, Ch. 21, L. 1971; amd. Sec. 3, Ch. 455, L. 1975; amd. Sec. 2, Ch. 444, L. 1977; R.C.M. 1947, 69-4806; amd. Sec. 2, Ch. 337, L. 1993; amd. Sec. 4, Ch. 595, L. 1993; amd. Sec. 11, Ch. 497, L. 1995; amd. Sec. 2, Ch. 582, L. 1995.

Cross-References

Prevention of discharge of waste products from vessels, 23-2-521, 23-2-522.

Dead animals - unlawful disposition, 75-10-213.

Action for damage to water supply caused by metal mining operation, 82-4-355.

75-5-606 through 75-5-610 reserved.

75-5-611. Violation of chapter - administrative actions and penalties - notice and hearing. (1) When the department has reason to believe that a violation of this chapter, a rule adopted under this chapter, or a condition of a permit or authorization required by a rule adopted under this chapter has occurred, it may have a written notice letter served personally or by certified mail on the alleged violator or the violator's agent. The notice letter must state:

(a) the provision of statute, rule, permit, or approval alleged to be violated;

(b) the facts alleged to constitute the violation;

(c) the specific nature of corrective action that the department requires;

(d) as applicable, the amount of the administrative penalty that will be assessed by order under subsection (2) if the corrective action is not taken within the time provided under subsection (1)(e); and

(e) as applicable, the time within which the corrective action is to be taken or the administrative penalty will be assessed. For the purposes of this chapter, service by certified mail is complete on the date of receipt. Except as provided in subsection (2)(a)(ii), an administrative penalty may not be assessed until the provisions of subsection (1) have been complied with.

(2) (a) The department may issue an administrative notice and order in lieu of the notice letter provided under subsection (1) if the department's action:

(i) does not involve assessment of an administrative penalty; or

(ii) seeks an administrative penalty only for an activity that it believes and alleges has violated or is violating 75-5-605.

(b) A notice and order issued under this section must meet all of the requirements specified in subsection (1).

(3) In a notice and order given under subsection (1), the department may require the alleged violator to appear before the board for a public hearing and to answer the charges. The hearing must be held no sooner than 15 days after service of the notice and order, except that the board may set an earlier date for hearing if it is requested to do so by the alleged violator. The board may set a later date for hearing at the request of the alleged violator if the alleged violator shows good cause for delay.

(4) If the department does not require an alleged violator to appear before the board for a public hearing, the alleged violator may request the board to conduct the hearing. The request must be in writing and must be filed with the department no later than 30 days after service of a notice and order under subsection (2). If a request is filed, a hearing must be held within a reasonable time. If a hearing is not requested within 30 days after service upon the alleged violator, the opportunity for a contested case appeal to the board under Title 2, chapter 4, part 6, is waived.

(5) If a contested case hearing is held under this section, it must be public and must be held in the county in which the violation is alleged to have occurred or in Lewis and Clark County.

(6) (a) After a hearing, the board shall make findings and conclusions that explain its decision.

(b) If the board determines that a violation has occurred, it shall also issue an appropriate order for the prevention, abatement, or control of pollution, the assessment of administrative penalties, or both.

(c) If the order requires abatement or control of pollution, the board shall state the date or dates by which a violation must cease and may prescribe timetables for necessary action in preventing, abating, or controlling the pollution.

(d) If the order requires payment of an administrative penalty, the board shall explain how it determined the amount of the administrative penalty.

(e) If the board determines that a violation has not occurred, it shall declare the department's notice void.

(7) The alleged violator may petition the board for a rehearing on the basis of new evidence, which petition the board may grant for good cause shown.

(8) Instead of issuing an order, the board may direct the department to initiate appropriate action for recovery of a penalty under 75-5-631, 75-5-632, 75-5-633, or 75-5-635.

(9) (a) An action initiated under this section may include an administrative penalty of not more than \$10,000 for each day of each violation; however, the maximum penalty may not exceed \$100,000 for any related series of violations.

(b) Administrative penalties collected under this section must be deposited in the general fund.

(c) In determining the amount of penalty to be assessed to a person, the department and board shall consider the criteria stated in 75-5-631(4) and rules promulgated under 75-5-201.

(d) The contested case provisions of the Montana Administrative Procedure Act, provided for in Title 2, chapter 4, part 6, apply to a hearing conducted under this section.

History: En. Sec. 13, Ch. 21, L. 1971; amd. Sec. 65, Ch. 349, L. 1974; amd. Sec. 8, Ch. 455, L. 1975; R.C.M. 1947, 69-4820; amd. Sec. 2, Ch. 504, L. 1993.

Cross-References

Montana Administrative Procedure Act - contested case hearings, Title 2, ch. 4, part 6.

75-5-612. Additional sanctions authorized. In addition to all other remedies created by this chapter, the department is authorized to take appropriate enforcement action on its own initiative to prevent, abate, and control:

- (1) the pollution of state waters;
- (2) any violation of a condition or limitation imposed by a permit issued under 75-5-402(1); or
- (3) any violation of rules relating to pretreatment standards.

History: En. 69-4820.1 by Sec. 5, Ch. 506, L. 1973; amd. Sec. 9, Ch. 455, L. 1975; amd. Sec. 10, Ch. 140, L. 1977; amd. Sec. 4, Ch. 308, L. 1977; amd. Sec. 5, Ch. 444, L. 1977; R.C.M. 1947, 69-4820.1(1).

75-5-613. Compliance orders. In furtherance of 75-5-612, a person violating a condition, limitation, standard, or other requirement established pursuant to this chapter may be served with a compliance order issued by the department. The order must specify the condition, limitation, standard, or other requirement violated and must set a time for compliance. However, in establishing a time for compliance, the department shall take into account the seriousness of the violation and any good faith efforts that have been made to comply with the condition, limitation, standard, or other requirement that has been violated. The compliance order issued under this section shall be served either personally by a person qualified to perform service under the Montana Rules of Civil Procedure or by certified mail.

History: En. 69-4820.1 by Sec. 5, Ch. 506, L. 1973; amd. Sec. 9, Ch. 455, L. 1975; amd. Sec. 10, Ch. 140, L. 1977; amd. Sec. 4, Ch. 308, L. 1977; amd. Sec. 5, Ch. 444, L. 1977; R.C.M. 1947, 69-4820.1(2).

Cross-References

Service of process, Rules 4D and 5, M.R.Civ.P. (see Title 25, ch. 20).

75-5-614. Injunctions authorized. (1) The department is authorized to commence a civil action seeking appropriate relief, including a permanent or temporary injunction, for a violation that would be subject to a compliance order under 75-5-613. An action under this subsection may be commenced in the district court of the county where a violation occurs or is threatened, and the court has jurisdiction to restrain the violation and to require compliance.

(2) The department may bring an action for an injunction against the continuation of an alleged violation of the terms or conditions of a permit issued by the department or any rule or effluent standard promulgated under this chapter or against a person who fails to comply with an emergency order issued by the department under 75-5-621 or a final order of the board. The court to which the department applies for an injunction may issue a temporary injunction if it finds that there is reasonable cause to believe that the allegations of the department are true, and it may issue a temporary restraining order pending action on the temporary injunction.

History: (1)En. 69-4820.1 by Sec. 5, Ch. 506, L. 1973; amd. Sec. 9, Ch. 455, L. 1975; amd. Sec. 10, Ch. 140, L. 1977; amd. Sec. 4, Ch. 308, L. 1977; amd. Sec. 5, Ch. 444, L. 1977; Sec. 69-4820.1 R.C.M. 1947; (2)En. Sec. 19, Ch. 21, L. 1971; amd. Sec. 68, Ch. 349, L. 1974.

amd. Sec. 12, Ch. 455, L. 1975; Sec. 69-4325, R.C.M. 1947; R.C.M. 1947, 69-4820.1(3), 69-4825; amd. Sec. 12, Ch. 497, L. 1995.

Cross-References

Injunctions - jurisdiction of Supreme Court, 3-2-205.

Injunctions, Title 27, ch. 19.

75-5-615. Violators subject to penalties. (1) A person found to be in violation of a condition, limitation, standard, or other requirement established pursuant to 75-5-612 through 75-5-614 is subject to the penalty provisions of 75-5-631, 75-5-632, 75-5-633, and 75-5-635.

(2) For the purpose of this section, the term "person" means, in addition to the definition contained in 75-5-103, any responsible corporate officer.

History: En. 69-4820.1 by Sec. 5, Ch. 506, L. 1973; amd. Sec. 9, Ch. 455, L. 1975; amd. Sec. 10, Ch. 140, L. 1977; amd. Sec. 4, Ch. 308, L. 1977; amd. Sec. 5, Ch. 444, L. 1977; R.C.M. 1947, 69-4820.1(4), (5); amd. Sec. 6, Ch. 68, L. 1979.

75-5-616. Enforcement of permits and chapter. The department shall take actions that are authorized under this part to ensure that the terms and conditions of issued permits are complied with and to ensure that violations of this chapter are appropriately prosecuted.

History: En. Sec. 7, Ch. 21, L. 1971; amd. Sec. 3, Ch. 506, L. 1973; amd. Sec. 63, Ch. 349, L. 1974; amd. Sec. 6, Ch. 455, L. 1975; amd. Sec. 4, Ch. 444, L. 1977; R.C.M. 1947, 69-4809.1(1)(g); amd. Sec. 6, Ch. 297, L. 1995.

75-5-617. Enforcement response. (1) Whenever, on the basis of information available to the department, the department finds that a person is in violation of this chapter, a rule adopted under this chapter, or a condition or limitation in a permit, authorization, or order issued under this chapter, the department shall initiate an enforcement response, which may include any of the following actions:

- (a) issuance of a letter notifying the person of the violation and requiring compliance;
- (b) issuance of an order requiring the person to correct the violation pursuant to 75-5-601, 75-5-611, 75-5-613, and 75-5-621;
- (c) bringing a judicial action as authorized by 75-5-614 and 75-5-622; or
- (d) seeking administrative or judicial penalties as provided under 75-5-611, 75-5-615, and 75-5-631 through 75-5-633.

(2) Unless an alleged violation represents an imminent threat to human health, safety, or welfare or to the environment, the department shall first issue a letter notifying the person of the violation and requiring compliance. If the person fails to respond to the conditions in the department's letter, then the department shall take further action as provided in subsection (1).

(3) The provisions of this chapter do not limit the authority of the department to bring a judicial action, which may include the assessment of penalties, prior to initiating any administrative action authorized by this chapter.

History: En. Sec. 5, Ch. 297, L. 1995.

75-5-618 through 75-5-620 reserved.

75-5-621. Emergencies. (1) Notwithstanding other provisions of this chapter, if the department finds that a person is committing or is about to commit an act in violation of this chapter or an order or rule issued under this chapter that, if it occurs or continues, will cause

substantial pollution the harmful effects of which will not be remedied immediately after the commission or cessation of the act, the department may order the person to stop, avoid, or moderate the act so that the substantial injury will not occur. The order is effective immediately upon receipt by the person to whom it is directed, unless the department provides otherwise.

(2) Notice of the order must conform to the requirements of 75-5-611(1) so far as practicable. The notice must indicate that the order is an emergency order.

(3) Upon issuing an order, the department shall fix a place and time for a hearing before the board, not later than 5 days after issuing the order unless the person to whom the order is directed requests a later time. The department may deny a request for a later time if it finds that the person to whom the order is directed is not complying with the order. The hearing must be conducted in the manner specified in 75-5-611. As soon as practicable after the hearing, the board shall affirm, modify, or set aside the order of the department. The order of the board must be accompanied by the information required in 75-5-611(6). An action for review of the order of the board may be initiated in the manner specified in 75-5-641. The initiation of an action or taking of an appeal may not stay the effectiveness of the order unless the court finds that the board did not have reasonable cause to issue an order under this section.

History: En. Sec. 18, Ch. 21, L. 1971; amd. Sec. 11, Ch. 140, L. 1977; R.C.M. 1947, 69-4824; amd. Sec. 7, Ch. 297, L. 1995; amd. Sec. 266, Ch. 42, L. 1997.

Cross-References

Energy emergency - power of Governor to suspend pollution control standards, 90-4-310.

75-5-622. Additional emergency powers. Notwithstanding any other provisions of this chapter, the department, upon receipt of evidence that a pollution source or combination of sources is endangering the health, welfare, or livelihood of a person, may bring suit in the district court of any county in which the defendant is located or resides or is doing business to enjoin the discharge of pollutants causing or contributing to the alleged pollution.

History: En. 69-4824.1 by Sec. 7, Ch. 506, L. 1973; R.C.M. 1947, 69-4824.1.

75-5-623 through 75-5-630 reserved.

75-5-631. Civil penalties - injunctions not barred. (1) In an action initiated by the department to collect civil penalties against a person who is found to have violated this chapter or a rule, permit, effluent standard, or order issued under the provisions of this chapter, the person is subject to a civil penalty not to exceed \$25,000. Each day of violation constitutes a separate violation.

(2) Action under this section does not bar enforcement of this chapter or of rules or orders issued under it by injunction or other appropriate remedy.

(3) The department shall institute and maintain enforcement proceedings in the name of the state.

(4) In an action seeking penalties under this section, the department shall take into account the following factors in determining an appropriate settlement or judgment, as appropriate:

(a) the nature, circumstances, extent, and gravity of the violation; and

(b) with respect to the violator, the violator's ability to pay and prior history of violations, the economic benefit or savings, if any, to the violator resulting from the violator's action, the amounts voluntarily expended by the violator to address or mitigate the violation or impacts of the violation to waters of the state, and other matters that justice may require.

History: En. Sec. 17, Ch. 21, L. 1971; amd. Sec. 6, Ch. 506, L. 1973; amd. Sec. 67, Ch. 349, L. 1974; amd. Sec. 11, Ch. 455, L. 1975; R.C.M. 1947, 69-4823(1), (3); amd. Sec. 1, Ch. 644, L. 1991; amd. Sec. 8, Ch. 297, L. 1995; amd. Sec. 13, Ch. 497, L. 1995.

Cross-References

Injunctions, Title 27, ch. 19.

75-5-632. Criminal penalties. A person who willfully or negligently violates 75-5-605 or any pretreatment standard established pursuant to this chapter is guilty of an offense and, upon conviction, is subject to a fine not to exceed \$25,000 per day of violation or imprisonment for not more than 1 year, or both. Following an initial conviction under this section, subsequent convictions subject a person to a fine of not more than \$50,000 per day of violation or imprisonment for not more than 2 years, or both.

History: En. Sec. 17, Ch. 21, L. 1971; amd. Sec. 6, Ch. 506, L. 1973; amd. Sec. 67, Ch. 349, L. 1974; amd. Sec. 11, Ch. 455, L. 1975; R.C.M. 1947, 69-4823(2); amd. Sec. 9, Ch. 297, L. 1995.

Cross-References

Execution of criminal fine, 46-19-102.

75-5-633. Penalties for false statements and falsifying monitoring. Any person who knowingly makes any false statement, representation, or certification in any application, record, report, plan, or other document filed or required to be maintained under this chapter or who falsifies, tampers with, or knowingly renders inaccurate any monitoring device or method required to be maintained under this chapter shall upon conviction be punished by a fine of not more than \$25,000 or by imprisonment for not more than 6 months, or both.

History: En. Sec. 17, Ch. 21, L. 1971; amd. Sec. 6, Ch. 506, L. 1973; amd. Sec. 67, Ch. 349, L. 1974; amd. Sec. 11, Ch. 455, L. 1975; R.C.M. 1947, 69-4823(6); amd. Sec. 2, Ch. 644, L. 1991.

75-5-634. Disposition of fines and civil penalties. Fines and civil penalties collected under this chapter, except those collected in a justice's court, must be deposited into the state general fund.

History: En. Sec. 17, Ch. 21, L. 1971; amd. Sec. 6, Ch. 506, L. 1973; amd. Sec. 67, Ch. 349, L. 1974; amd. Sec. 11, Ch. 455, L. 1975; R.C.M. 1947, 69-4823(5); amd. Sec. 43, Ch. 557, L. 1987; amd. Sec. 3, Ch. 600, L. 1991; amd. Sec. 62, Ch. 509, L. 1995.

Cross-References

Collection and disposition of fines, penalties, forfeitures, and fees. 3-10-601.

75-5-635. Costs and expenses - recovery by department. (1) In a civil action initiated by the department under this chapter, the department may ask for and the court is authorized to assess a violator for the cost of the investigation or monitoring survey that led to the establishment of the violation and any expense incurred by the state in removing, correcting, or terminating any of the adverse effects upon water quality resulting from the unauthorized discharge of pollutants.

(2) Any costs and expenses recovered by the department under the provisions of subsection (1) must be deposited in the state general fund.

History: En. Sec. 17, Ch. 21, L. 1971; amd. Sec. 6, Ch. 506, L. 1973; amd. Sec. 67, Ch. 349, L. 1974; amd. Sec. 11, Ch. 455, L. 1975; R.C.M. 1947, 69-4823(7); amd. Sec. 4, Ch. 600, L. 1991; amd. Sec. 63, Ch. 509, L. 1995.

75-5-636. Investigation of complaints by other parties. A person, association, corporation, or agency of the state or federal government may notify the department of an alleged violation of this chapter. Based upon information submitted by the person, association, corporation, or agency, the department shall conduct an investigation to determine the validity of the complaint. If a violation is established by the department's investigation, the department shall initiate an appropriate enforcement response as described in 75-5-617. If the investigation proves the protest to have been without reasonable cause, the department may seek recovery of investigative costs from the person who made the notification.

History: En. Sec. 20, Ch. 21, L. 1971; amd. Sec. 69, Ch. 349, L. 1974; amd. Sec. 13, Ch. 455, L. 1975; R.C.M. 1947, 69-4826; amd. Sec. 10, Ch. 297, L. 1995; amd. Sec. 14, Ch. 497, L. 1995.

Cross-References

Mandamus, Title 27, ch. 26.

75-5-637 through 75-5-640 reserved.

75-5-641. Appeals from board orders - review by district court. (1) An appeal of an order of the board shall be in the district court of the county in which the alleged source of pollution is located.

(2) A person interested in the order may intervene, in the manner provided by the rules of civil procedure, if he shows good cause. An intervenor is a party for the purposes of this chapter.

(3) The attorney general shall represent the board if requested, or the department may appoint special counsel for the proceedings, subject to the approval of the attorney general.

(4) The initiation of an action for review or the taking of an appeal does not stay the effectiveness of any order of the board unless the court finds that there is probable cause to believe:

(a) that refusal to grant a stay will cause serious harm to the affected party; and

(b) that any violation found by the board will not continue or, if it does continue, any harmful effects on state waters will be remedied immediately on the cessation of the violation.

(5) If a court does not stay the effectiveness of an order of the board, it may enforce compliance with that order by issuing a temporary restraining order or an injunction at the request of the board.

History: En. Sec. 15, Ch. 21, L. 1971; amd. Sec. 66, Ch. 349, L. 1974; R.C.M. 1947, 69-4821.

Cross-References

Montana Administrative Procedure Act - judicial review, Title 2, ch. 4, part 7.

Montana Rules of Civil Procedure - intervention, Rule 24, M.R.Civ.P. (see Title 25, ch. 20).

Injunctions, Title 27, ch. 19.

Part 7

Water Quality Assessment

75-5-701. Purpose. Consistent with the policy established in 75-5-101(2) to provide a comprehensive program for the prevention, abatement, and control of water pollution, the purpose of this part is to further direct the department to monitor state waters to accurately assess their quality and, when required, to develop total maximum daily loads for those water bodies identified as threatened or impaired.

History: En. Sec. 2, Ch. 541, L. 1997.

75-5-702. Monitoring - water quality assessment listing - statewide advisory group. (1) The department shall monitor state waters to assess the quality of those waters and to identify surface water bodies or segments of surface water bodies that are threatened or impaired. The department shall use the monitoring results to revise the list of water bodies that are identified as threatened or impaired and to establish a priority ranking for TMDL development for those waters in accordance with subsections (4) and (7).

(2) In revising the list prepared pursuant to this section, the department shall use all currently available data, including information or data obtained from federal, state, and local agencies, private entities, or individuals with an interest in water quality protection. Except as provided in subsection (6), the department may modify the list only if there is sufficient credible data to support the modification. Prior to publishing a final list, the department shall provide public notice and allow 60 days for public comment on the draft list. The department shall make available for public review, upon request, documentation used in the determination to list or delist a particular water body, including, at a minimum, a description of the information, data, and methodology used. The department may charge a reasonable fee for the documentation, commensurate with the cost of providing the documentation to the requestor.

(3) A person may request that the department add or remove a water body or reprioritize a water body on a draft or published list by providing the data or information necessary to support the request. The department shall review the data within 60 days from its submittal. If the department determines that there is sufficient credible data to grant the request, the department shall provide public notice of its intended action and allow 60 days for public comment prior to taking action on the request. A person aggrieved by the department's decision to grant or deny the request may appeal the department's decision to the board.

(4) The department shall, in consultation with local conservation districts and watershed advisory groups pursuant to 75-5-704, review and revise the list and priority rankings of water bodies identified as threatened or impaired. The department shall review and revise the list at intervals not to exceed 5 years. The department shall make available for public review the data and information used in making any changes in its list of threatened or impaired water bodies that is developed and maintained pursuant to this section.

(5) By October 1, 1999, and in consultation with the statewide TMDL advisory group established pursuant to subsection (9), the department shall develop and maintain a data management system that can be used to assess the validity and reliability of the data used in the listing and priority ranking process. The department shall make available to the public, upon request, data from its data management system. The department may charge a reasonable fee for the data, commensurate with its cost of providing the data to the requestor.

(6) By October 1, 1999, and in consultation with the statewide TMDL advisory group, the department shall use the data management system developed and maintained pursuant to

subsection (5) to revise the list and to remove any water body that lacks sufficient credible data to support its listing. If the department removes a water body because there is a lack of sufficient credible data to support its listing, the department shall monitor and assess that water body during the next field season or as soon as possible thereafter to determine whether it is a threatened water body or an impaired water body.

(7) In prioritizing water bodies for TMDL development, the department shall, in consultation with the statewide TMDL advisory group, take into consideration the following:

- (a) the beneficial uses established for a water body;
- (b) the extent that natural factors over which humans have no control are contributing to any impairment;
- (c) the impacts to human health and aquatic life;
- (d) the degree of public interest and support;
- (e) the character of the pollutant and the severity and magnitude of water quality standard noncompliance;
- (f) whether the water body is an important high-quality resource in an early stage of degradation;
- (g) the size of the water body not achieving standards;
- (h) immediate programmatic needs, such as waste load allocations for new permits or permit renewals and load allocations for new nonpoint sources;
- (i) court orders and decisions relating to water quality;
- (j) state policies and priorities, including the protection and restoration of native fish when appropriate;
- (k) the availability of technology and resources to correct the problems;
- (l) whether actions or voluntary programs that are likely to correct the impairment of a particular water body are currently in place; and
- (m) the recreational, economic, and aesthetic importance of a particular water body.

(8) The department shall, in consultation with the statewide TMDL advisory group, develop a method of rating water bodies according to the criteria and considerations described in subsection (7) in order to rank the listed water bodies as high priority, moderate priority, or low priority for TMDL development. The department may not rank a water body as a high priority under this section without first validating the data necessary to support the ranking.

(9) (a) The department shall establish a statewide TMDL advisory group to serve in the consultation capacity set forth in 75-5-703, 75-5-704, and this section. Fourteen members, and any replacement members that may be necessary, must be appointed by the director, based upon one nomination from each of the following interests:

- (i) livestock-oriented agriculture;
- (ii) farming-oriented agriculture;
- (iii) conservation or environmental interests;
- (iv) water-based recreationists;
- (v) the forestry industry;
- (vi) municipalities;
- (vii) point source dischargers;
- (viii) mining;
- (ix) federal land management agencies;
- (x) state trust land management agencies;
- (xi) supervisors of soil and water conservation districts for counties east of the continental divide;
- (xii) supervisors of soil and water conservation districts for counties west of the continental divide;
- (xiii) the hydroelectric industry; and
- (xiv) fishing-related businesses

(b) If the director receives more than one nomination from a particular interest, the director shall notify the respective nominators and request that they agree on one nominee.

(10) The department shall provide public notice of meetings of the statewide TMDL advisory group and shall solicit, document, and consider public comments provided during the deliberations of the advisory group.

History: En. Sec. 3, Ch. 541, L. 1997; amd. Sec. 1, Ch. 93, L. 1999.

75-5-703. Development and implementation of total maximum daily loads. (1) The department shall, in consultation with local conservation districts and watershed advisory groups, develop total maximum daily loads or TMDLs for threatened or impaired water bodies or segments of water bodies in order of the priority ranking established by the department under 75-5-702. Each TMDL must be established at a level that will achieve compliance with applicable water quality standards and must include a reasonable margin of safety that takes into account any lack of knowledge concerning the relationship between the TMDL and water quality standards. The department shall consider applicable guidance from the federal environmental protection agency, as well as the environmental, economic, and social costs and benefits of developing and implementing a TMDL.

(2) In establishing TMDLs under subsection (1), the department may establish waste load allocations for point sources and may establish load allocations for nonpoint sources, as set forth in subsection (8), and may allow for effluent trading. The department shall, in consultation with local conservation districts and watershed advisory groups, develop reasonable land, soil, and water conservation practices specifically recognizing established practices and programs for nonpoint sources.

(3) Within 10 years from May 5, 1997, the department shall develop TMDLs for all water bodies on the list of waters that are threatened or impaired, as that list read on May 5, 1997. This provision does not apply to water bodies that are subsequently added or removed from the list according to the provisions of 75-5-702. The department shall establish a schedule for completing the TMDLs within the 10-year period established by this subsection. The schedule must also provide a reasonable timeframe for TMDL development for impaired and threatened water bodies that are listed subsequent to May 5, 1997, and are prioritized as set forth in 75-5-702.

(4) The department shall provide guidance for TMDL development on any threatened or impaired water body, regardless of its priority ranking, if the necessary funding and resources from sources outside the department are available to develop the TMDL and to monitor the effectiveness of implementation efforts. The department shall review the TMDL and either approve or disapprove the TMDL. If the TMDL is approved by the department, the department shall ensure implementation of the TMDL according to the provisions of subsections (6) through (8).

(5) For water bodies listed under 75-5-702, the department shall provide assistance and support to landowners, local conservation districts, and watershed advisory groups for interim measures that may restore water quality and remove the need to establish a TMDL, such as informational programs regarding control of nonpoint source pollution and voluntary measures designed to correct impairments. When a source implements voluntary measures to reduce pollutants prior to development of a TMDL, those measures, whether or not reflected in subsequently issued waste discharge permits, must be recognized in development of the TMDL in a way that gives credit for the pollution reduction efforts.

(6) After development of a TMDL and upon approval of the TMDL, the department shall:

(a) incorporate the TMDL into its current continuing planning process;

(b) incorporate the waste load allocation developed for point sources during the TMDL process into appropriate water discharge permits; and

(c) assist and inform landowners regarding the application of a voluntary program of reasonable land, soil, and water conservation practices developed pursuant to subsection (2).

(7) Once the control measures identified in subsection (6) have been implemented, the department shall, in consultation with the statewide TMDL advisory group, develop a monitoring program to assess the waters that are subject to the TMDL to determine whether compliance with water quality standards has been attained for a particular water body or whether the water body is no longer threatened. The monitoring program must be designed based on the specific impairments or pollution sources. The department's monitoring program must include long-term monitoring efforts for the analysis of the effectiveness of the control measures developed.

(8) The department shall support a voluntary program of reasonable land, soil, and water conservation practices to achieve compliance with water quality standards for nonpoint source activities for water bodies that are subject to a TMDL developed and implemented pursuant to this section.

(9) If the monitoring program provided under subsection (7) demonstrates that the TMDL is not achieving compliance with applicable water quality standards within 5 years after approval of a TMDL, the department shall conduct a formal evaluation of progress in restoring water quality and the status of reasonable land, soil, and water conservation practice implementation to determine if:

(a) the implementation of a new or improved phase of voluntary reasonable land, soil, and water conservation practice is necessary;

(b) water quality is improving but a specified time is needed for compliance with water quality standards; or

(c) revisions to the TMDL are necessary to achieve applicable water quality standards.

(10) Pending completion of a TMDL on a water body listed pursuant to 75-5-702:

(a) point source discharges to a listed water body may commence or continue, provided that:

(i) the discharge is in conformance with a discharge permit that reflects, in the manner and to the extent applicable for the particular discharge, the provisions of 75-5-303;

(ii) the discharge will not cause a decline in water quality for parameters by which the water body is impaired; and

(iii) minimum treatment requirements adopted pursuant to 75-5-305 are met;

(b) the issuance of a discharge permit may not be precluded because a TMDL is pending:

(c) new or expanded nonpoint source activities affecting a listed water body may commence and continue provided those activities are conducted in accordance with reasonable land, soil, and water conservation practices;

(d) for existing nonpoint source activities, the department shall continue to use educational nonpoint source control programs and voluntary measures as provided in subsections (5) and (6).

(11) This section may not be construed to prevent a person from filing an application or petition under 75-5-302, 75-5-310, or 75-5-312.

History: En. Sec. 4, Ch. 541, L. 1997; amd. Sec. 2, Ch. 93, L. 1999.

75-5-704. Watershed advisory groups. (1) In implementing the consultation requirements under 75-5-702(4) and 75-5-703(1) and (2), the department shall request the participation of representatives of the following interest groups to work in an advisory capacity with the local conservation districts and the department:

(a) livestock-oriented agriculture;

(b) farming-oriented agriculture;

(c) conservation or environmental interests

- (d) water-based recreationists;
- (e) the forestry industry;
- (f) municipalities;
- (g) affected or potentially affected point source dischargers;
- (h) mining;
- (i) existing local watershed groups;
- (j) federal land management agencies;
- (k) state trust land management agencies;
- (l) the tourism industry;
- (m) the hydroelectric industry, if applicable; and
- (n) fishing-related businesses.

(2) In implementing the consultation requirements of 75-5-702 and 75-5-703, the department shall:

(a) prior to consultation with the statewide TMDL advisory group pursuant to 75-5-702(7) and (8), schedule meetings with appropriate local conservation districts and the watershed advisory groups at a location within their affected geographic area to review and revise the list of water bodies provided for in 75-5-702; and

(b) at a meeting held pursuant to subsection (2)(a), request whether there is new information that may affect the listing or priority ranking on water bodies within the affected area and solicit comments on revising the list.

(3) Based upon the information provided pursuant to subsection (2)(b), the department shall revise the list according to 75-5-702.

(4) Prior to and during the development of a TMDL within a particular watershed or basin, the department shall schedule a meeting or meetings with appropriate local conservation districts and watershed advisory groups at a location within the affected geographic area in order to solicit comments on developing the TMDL and information on sources that may be contributing to water quality impairment.

History: En. Sec. 5, Ch. 541, L. 1997.

75-5-705. Nonimpairment of water rights. Nothing in this part may be construed to divest, impair, or diminish any water right recognized pursuant to Title 85.

History: En. Sec. 6, Ch. 541, L. 1997.

Parts 8 through 10 reserved

Part 11

Water Pollution Control State Revolving Fund

Part Cross-References

Water and Wastewater Operators' Advisory Council, 2-15-2105.

Metropolitan sanitary and/or storm sewer districts, Title 7, ch. 13, part 1.

County water and/or sewer districts, Title 7, ch. 13, part 22 and 23.

Consolidated local government waters supply and sewer districts, Title 7, ch. 13, part 30.

Municipal sewage and/or water systems, Title 7, ch. 13, part 43.

Water treatment plant operators, Title 37, ch. 42.

75-5-1101. Short title. This part may be cited as the "Water Pollution Control State Revolving Fund Act".

History: En. Sec. 1, Ch. 678, L. 1989; amd. Sec. 2, Ch. 538, L. 1997.

75-5-1102. Definitions. Unless the context requires otherwise, in this part, the following definitions apply:

(1) "Administrative costs" means costs incurred by the department and the department of natural resources and conservation in the administration of the program, including but not limited to costs of servicing loans and issuing debt; program startup costs; financial, management, and legal consulting fees; and reimbursement costs for support services from other state agencies.

(2) "Cost" means, with reference to a project, all capital costs incurred or to be incurred by a municipality or a private person, including but not limited to engineering, construction, financing, and other fees, interest during construction, and a reasonable allowance for contingencies to the extent permitted by the federal act and regulations promulgated thereunder.

(3) "Federal act" means the Federal Water Pollution Control Act, also known as the Clean Water Act, 33 U.S.C. 1251 through 1387, as amended.

(4) "Intended use plan" means the annual plan adopted by the department and submitted to the environmental protection agency that describes how the state intends to use the money in the revolving fund.

(5) "Loan" means a loan of money from the revolving fund to a municipality or a private person.

(6) "Municipality" means any state agency, city, town, or other public body created pursuant to state law, including an authority as defined in 75-6-304.

(7) "Private person" means an individual, corporation, partnership, or other nongovernmental legal entity.

(8) "Program" means the water pollution control state revolving fund program established by this part.

(9) (a) "Project" means an activity that is eligible for financing by the program under the federal act, including treatment works, as defined under section 1292 of the federal act (33 U.S.C. 1292), and nonpoint source pollution control under section 1329 of the federal act (33 U.S.C. 1329), and for which a municipality or private person makes an application for a loan or other financial assistance.

(b) "Project" does not include a solid waste management system, as defined in 75-10-203, except for a project that is intended specifically for the closure or postclosure care of or ground water corrective action at a landfill that:

(i) was in operation on May 5, 1997, and that accepts an annual average of less than 20,000 tons of solid waste a year; or

(ii) was closed prior to May 5, 1997.

(10) "Revolving fund" means the fund established by 75-5-1106.

History: En. Sec. 2, Ch. 678, L. 1989; amd. Sec. 3, Ch. 538, L. 1997; amd. Sec. 22, Ch. 498, L. 1999

Cross-References

Water quality generally - chapter definitions, 75-5-103.

75-5-1103. Water pollution control state revolving fund program. There is a program under which the state may provide financial assistance to municipalities and private

persons to finance or refinance part or all of the cost of projects. The program must be administered in accordance with this part and the federal act.

History: En. Sec. 3, Ch. 678, L. 1989; amd. Sec. 4, Ch. 538, L. 1997.

75-5-1104. Authorization of agreement - content. (1) The department may enter into a capitalization grant agreement or other agreement with the United States environmental protection agency to implement the program and may accept from that agency other grants and loans to carry out the program.

(2) In entering into the agreement, the director of the department may commit the state to:

(a) accept grant payments from the environmental protection agency in accordance with the schedule established by the administrator of that agency and deposit the payments in the revolving fund established in 75-5-1106;

(b) deposit in the revolving fund from state money an amount equal to at least 20% of the total amount of all capitalization grants made to the state as provided by 75-5-1106 on or before the date on which each quarterly federal grant payment is made to the state;

(c) provide financial assistance to municipalities and private persons in accordance with this part in an amount equal to 120% of the amount of each grant payment within a time period not to exceed 1 year after receipt of a grant;

(d) expend all funds in the revolving fund in an expeditious and timely manner;

(e) use all funds deposited in the revolving fund as a result of the capitalization grant to ensure progress, as determined by the governor of the state, toward compliance with enforceable deadlines, goals, and requirements of the federal act;

(f) expend each quarterly grant payment in accordance with the laws and procedures applicable to commitment or expenditure of revenues of the state;

(g) use accounting, audit, and fiscal procedures conforming to generally accepted government accounting standards;

(h) as a condition of making a loan or providing other financial assistance from the revolving fund, require that the municipality or private person will maintain project accounts in accordance with generally accepted government accounting standards;

(i) make annual reports to the environmental protection agency concerning the use of the revolving fund as required by the federal act; and

(j) any other covenants, commitments, and obligations necessary to ensure that the state's administration of the program is consistent with the provisions of this part.

History: En. Sec. 4, Ch. 678, L. 1989; amd. Sec. 5, Ch. 538, L. 1997.

75-5-1105. Rulemaking. The department and the department of natural resources and conservation may adopt rules to implement the provisions of this part, including rules:

(1) prescribing the form and content of applications for loans and refinancing agreements;

(2) governing the application of the criteria for awarding loans;

(3) establishing additional terms and conditions for the making of loans and the security instruments and other necessary agreements; and

(4) establishing ceilings on the amount of individual loans to be made to municipalities and private persons, if considered appropriate and necessary for the successful administration of the program.

History: En. Sec. 9, Ch. 678, L. 1989; amd. Sec. 126, Ch. 418, L. 1995; amd. Sec. 6, Ch. 538, L. 1997.

Cross-References

Montana Administrative Procedure Act, Title 2, ch. 4.

75-5-1106. Revolving fund. (1) There is established in the state treasury a separate account designated as the water pollution control state revolving fund. There are established in the revolving fund as subaccounts a federal allocation account, a state allocation account, an administration account, an investment income account, and a debt service account.

(2) There must be credited to:

(a) the federal allocation account, all amounts received by the state from the following sources:

(i) funds provided pursuant to the federal act as capitalization grants for a state revolving fund to assist construction of projects;

(ii) grants or transfers of grants received under subchapter II of the federal act for projects; and

(iii) money transferred to the fund from the drinking water state revolving fund pursuant to 75-6-211;

(b) the state allocation account:

(i) the net proceeds of bonds of the state issued pursuant to 75-5-1121, less any proceeds deposited to the administration account as provided in subsection (2)(c)(ii); and

(ii) other money appropriated by the legislature;

(c) the administration account, an amount not to exceed 4% of the capitalization grant award or the maximum amount allowed by the federal act for payment of administrative costs and that may include a combination of:

(i) federal funds; and

(ii) the proceeds of bonds of the state issued pursuant to 75-5-1121 as the department determines necessary and as required by the federal act for state matching funds to assist in administering the program;

(d) the investment account, all money received from investment of amounts in those accounts in the revolving fund designated by the board of examiners in the resolution or trust indenture authorizing the issuance of bonds; and

(e) the debt service account, the interest portion of loan repayments.

(3) Each loan made as authorized by 75-5-1113 must be funded and disbursed from the federal allocation account or the state allocation account, or both, by the department and the department of natural resources and conservation as recommended by the department. All amounts received in payment of principal or interest on a loan must be credited to the revolving fund. If bonds have been issued pursuant to 75-5-1121 and are outstanding, the interest payments must be transferred to the debt service account securing the bonds. Money in the debt service account that is not required for debt service may be transferred to other accounts within the revolving fund as provided in the resolution or trust indenture authorizing the bonds. The department may transfer payments and prepayments of the principal of loans deposited in the state allocation account to the state allocation account of the state's drinking water revolving fund program.

(4) The department of natural resources and conservation may establish additional accounts and subaccounts within the revolving fund as it considers necessary to account for the program money and to ensure compliance with the federal act and this part.

(5) As allowed under the federal Safe Drinking Water Act, 42 U.S.C. 300f, et seq., the governor may reserve or transfer from the water pollution control state revolving fund program capitalization grant to the state's drinking water revolving fund program an amount up to 33% of the state's drinking water revolving fund program capitalization grant.

History: En. Sec. 5, Ch. 678, L. 1989; amd. Sec. 1, Ch. 788, L. 1991; amd. Sec. 187, Ch. 418, L. 1995; amd. Sec. 7, Ch. 538, L. 1997; amd. Sec. 1, Ch. 421, L. 1999.

75-5-1107. Uses of revolving fund. Money in the revolving fund must be used to:

- (1) make loans to municipalities to finance all or a portion of the cost of a project and to make loans to private persons to finance all or a portion of the cost of nonpoint source pollution control projects;
- (2) buy or refinance debt obligations of municipalities that were issued to finance projects within the state at or below market rates, provided that the obligations were incurred after March 7, 1985;
- (3) guarantee or purchase insurance for obligations of municipalities that were issued to finance projects in order to enhance credit or reduce interest rates;
- (4) provide a source of revenue or security for general obligation bonds the proceeds of which are deposited in the revolving fund;
- (5) provide loan guarantees for similar revolving funds established by municipalities;
- (6) earn interest on fund accounts; and
- (7) pay reasonable administrative costs of the program not to exceed 4% of all federal grant awards to the fund or the maximum amount allowed under the federal act.

History: En. Sec. 6, Ch. 678, L. 1989; amd. Sec. 8, Ch. 538, L. 1997.

75-5-1108. Use of funds - statutory appropriation. Money in the revolving fund is statutorily appropriated, as provided in 17-7-502, for the purposes of making loans to municipalities and private concerns and paying debt service on obligations.

History: En. Sec. 12, Ch. 678, L. 1989; amd. Sec. 53, Ch. 422, L. 1997.

75-5-1109 and 75-5-1110 reserved.

75-5-1111. Applications. (1) The department shall, after consultation with the department of natural resources and conservation, establish loan application procedures, including forms for the applications. Each application for a loan to finance construction of a project must include:

- (a) a reasonably detailed description of the project;
- (b) a reasonably detailed estimate of the cost of the project;
- (c) a timetable for the construction of the project and for payment of the cost of the project;
- (d) identification of the source or sources of funds to be used in addition to the proceeds of the loan to pay the cost of the project;
- (e) the source or sources of revenue proposed to be used to repay the loan;
- (f) a current financial statement showing assets, liabilities, revenue, and expenses of the applicant;
- (g) if the applicant is a municipality, a statement as to whether, at the time of application, there are any outstanding loans, notes, bonds, or other obligations of the municipality that were issued or incurred to finance any part of the municipality's project or system of which the project is a part and, if so, a description of the loans, notes, bonds, or other obligations;
- (h) if the applicant is a private person, a statement as to whether, at the time of application, there are any outstanding loans, notes, or other obligations of the private person and, if so, a description of the loans, notes, or other obligations; and

(i) any other information that the department or the department of natural resources and conservation may require to determine the feasibility of a project and the applicant's ability to repay the loan, including but not limited to engineering reports, economic feasibility studies, and legal opinions.

(2) Each application for a loan to refinance a project, including a purchase of outstanding obligations issued by a municipality to finance a project in whole or in part, must include:

- (a) a reasonably detailed description of the project;
- (b) a schedule of the cost of the project;
- (c) the date on which construction of the project began;
- (d) a description of the loans, notes, bonds, or other obligations to be refinanced and of any other loans, notes, bonds, or obligations issued or incurred to finance any part of the municipality's project; and
- (e) any other information that the department or the department of natural resources and conservation may require.

(3) Each application for financial assistance in the form of a guaranty or the purchase of insurance for a municipal obligation must include all items required by subsection (1) and any other information the department may require.

History: En. Sec. 7, Ch. 678, L. 1989; amd. Sec. 9, Ch. 538, L. 1997.

75-5-1112. Evaluation of projects and loan applications. The department of natural resources and conservation and the department shall evaluate projects and loan applications. In evaluating projects and loan applications, the following factors must be considered:

- (1) the technical design of the project to ensure compliance with all applicable statutes, rules, and design standards;
- (2) the financial capacity of the municipality or private person to repay the loan;
- (3) the financial, managerial, and technical ability of the municipality or private person to properly operate and maintain the project;
- (4) the feasibility of project completion given the total financing available;
- (5) the ability of the municipality or private person to pay the costs of the project without the requested financial assistance;
- (6) the total amount of loan funds available for financial assistance in the revolving fund;
- (7) the total amount requested in other applications that have been received or that are likely to be received;
- (8) the ranking of the project on the priority list or intended use plan; and
- (9) any other criteria that the department determines appropriate, considering the purposes of the federal act and the program.

History: En. Sec. 8, Ch. 678, L. 1989; amd. Sec. 18, Ch. 553, L. 1995; amd. Sec. 10, Ch. 538, L. 1997.

75-5-1113. Conditions on loans. (1) Upon approval of a project by the department, the department of natural resources and conservation may lend amounts on deposit in the revolving fund to a municipality or private person to pay part or all of the cost of a project or to buy or refinance an outstanding obligation of a municipality that was issued to finance a project. The loan is subject to the municipality or private person complying with the following conditions:

- (a) meeting requirements of financial capability set by the department of natural resources and conservation to ensure sufficient revenue to operate and maintain the project for its useful life and to repay the loan, including the establishment and maintenance by the

municipality of a reserve or revolving fund to secure the payment of principal of and interest on the loan to the extent permitted by the applicable law governing the municipality's obligation;

(b) agreeing to operate and maintain the project properly over its structural and material design life, which may not be less than the term of the loan;

(c) agreeing to maintain proper financial records in accordance with generally accepted accounting standards and agreeing that all records are subject to audit;

(d) meeting the requirements listed in the federal act for projects constructed with funds directly made available by federal capitalization grants;

(e) providing legal assurance that all necessary property titles, easements, and rights-of-way have been obtained to construct, operate, and maintain the project;

(f) submitting an engineering report evaluating the proposed project, including information demonstrating its cost-effectiveness and environmental information necessary for the department and the department of natural resources and conservation to fulfill their responsibilities under the Montana Environmental Policy Act and rules adopted to implement that act;

(g) complying with plan and specification requirements and other requirements established by the department; and

(h) providing for proper construction inspection and project management.

(2) Each loan, unless prepaid, is payable subject to the limitations of the federal act, with interest paid in annual or more frequent installments, the first of which must be received not more than 1 year after the completion date of the project and the last of which must be received not more than 20 years after the completion date.

(3) Subject to the limitations of the federal act, the interest rate on a loan must ensure that the interest payments on the loan and on other outstanding loans will be sufficient, if paid timely and in full, with other available funds in the revolving fund, including investment income, to enable the state to pay the principal of and interest on the bonds issued pursuant to 75-5-1121.

(a) The interest rate must be determined as of the date the loan is authorized by the department of natural resources and conservation.

(b) The rate may include any additional rate that the department of natural resources and conservation considers reasonable or necessary to provide a reserve for the repayment of the loans. The additional rate may be fixed or variable or may be calculated according to a formula, and it may differ from the rate established for any other loan. Once the reserve has been established at a level considered by the department to be reasonable and prudent for the loans outstanding, the department may use excess reserve payments to make grants to aid in the feasibility of projects.

(4) Each loan must be evidenced by a bond, note, or other evidence of indebtedness of the municipality or private person, in a form prescribed or approved by the department of natural resources and conservation, except that the bond, note, or other evidence must include provisions required by the federal act and must be consistent with the provisions of this part. The bond, note, or other evidence is not required to be identical for all loans. The department of natural resources and conservation may require that loans to private persons be further secured by a mortgage and other security interests in the project that is being financed or other forms of additional security as considered necessary, including personal guarantees and letters of credit.

(5) As a condition to making a loan, the department of natural resources and conservation, with the concurrence of the department, may impose a reasonable administrative fee that may be paid from the proceeds of the loan or other available funds of the municipality or private person. Administrative fees may be deposited:

(a) in a special administrative costs account that the department of natural resources and conservation may create for that purpose outside the revolving fund provided for in 75-5-1105 or