



# Fact Sheet

## Effluent Guidelines for Airport Deicing Discharges

The Administrator of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has signed for publication in the *Federal Register* technology-based effluent limitations guidelines and new source performance standards to control discharges of pollutants from airport deicing operations. The requirements generally apply to wastewater associated with the deicing of airfield pavement at primary airports. The rule also establishes new source performance standards for wastewater discharges associated with aircraft deicing for a subset of new airports. EPA expects this regulation to reduce pollutant discharges by at least 16 million pounds per year, at an annual cost of about \$3.5 million.

### Background on Airport Deicing

Airlines and airports conduct deicing operations on aircraft and airfield pavement to ensure the safety of passenger and cargo flights. In the absence of controls, deicing chemicals are widely dispersed causing pollutants to enter nearby rivers, lakes, streams, and bays.

### Background on Effluent Guidelines

Effluent guidelines are national regulations that control the discharge of pollutants to surface waters and to publicly owned treatment works. EPA issues effluent guidelines for categories of existing sources and new sources under Title III of the Clean Water Act to control pollution from these sources. The guidelines are based on the performance of treatment and control technologies. These guidelines are implemented in discharge permits issued by states and EPA regional offices under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System.

### Final Rule Requirements

Existing and new primary airports with 1,000 or more annual jet departures ("non-propeller aircraft") that generate wastewater associated with airfield pavement deicing are to use non-urea-containing deicers, or alternatively, meet a numeric effluent limitation for ammonia.

New airports with 10,000 annual departures located in cold climate zones are required to collect 60 percent of aircraft deicing fluid after deicing. Airports that discharge the collected aircraft deicing fluid directly to waters of the U.S. must also meet numeric discharge requirements for chemical oxygen demand. The rule does not establish uniform, national requirements for aircraft deicing discharges at existing airports. Such

requirements will continue to be established in general permits, or for individual permits on a site-specific, best professional judgment basis.

**Additional Information**

You can view or download the complete text of the *Federal Register* notice on EPA's website at <http://epa.gov/guide/airport>. For additional information, please contact Eric Strassler at [strassler.eric@epa.gov](mailto:strassler.eric@epa.gov) or 202-566-1026.