

Fact Sheet: Final 2016 Effluent Guidelines Program Plan

Summary

EPA has published its Final 2016 Effluent Guidelines Program Plan. The *Plan* describes EPA's Clean Water Act rulemakings and other actions designed to control industrial wastewater pollution.

Background

Effluent limitations guidelines and standards are national, technology-based requirements for controlling industrial wastewater discharges to surface waters and into publicly owned treatment works (also called municipal sewage treatment plants).

Clean Water Act section 304(m) requires EPA to biennially publish a plan for new and revised effluent limitations guidelines, after public review and comment. EPA typically publishes a preliminary plan upon which the public is invited to comment, and then publishes a final plan.

Decisions and action in the Final 2016 Effluent Guidelines Program Plan

As the *Plan* explains, EPA has completed all previously identified effluent limitations guidelines and standards rulemaking actions. In addition, the Plan identifies one new rulemaking (and the associated schedule) for the Steam Electric Power Generating Point Source Category. At this time, EPA has concluded that no other industries warrant new or revised effluent limitations guidelines and standards.

The Plan also announces that EPA is initiating three new studies. The purpose of one study is to look

holistically at the management of oil and gas extraction wastewater from onshore facilities. The focus of this study is not to look specifically at any one existing effluent guideline. Rather, EPA intends to engage with stakeholders to evaluate approaches to manage both conventional and unconventional oil and gas extraction wastewater from onshore facilities, including but not limited to an assessment of technologies for facilities that treat and discharge oil and gas extraction wastewater. EPA is also initiating two industry-wide studies of certain pollutants: nutrients and per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFASs). EPA's near term goal of these studies is to identify the extent to which these pollutants are discharged from industrial categories.

Lastly, the Plan announces that EPA is continuing its study of the Electrical and Electronic Components (E&EC) Point Source Category and initiating a more detailed study of this category. The focus will be on changes within the industry since the 1983 rulemaking, particularly as these changes pertain to wastewater characteristics and wastewater treatment technologies.

Where can I find more information?

You can access the Federal Register notice, the Preliminary 2016 Plan and all supporting documents on EPA's Effluent Guidelines Plan website at: <https://www.epa.gov/eg/effluent-guidelines-plan>.

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