
40 C.F.R. § 122.28

General permits (applicable to State NPDES programs, see § 123.25).

(a) *Coverage.* The Director may issue a general permit in accordance with the following:

(1) *Area.* The general permit shall be written to cover one or more categories or subcategories of discharges or sludge use or disposal practices or facilities described in the permit under paragraph (a)(2)(ii) of this section, except those covered by individual permits, within a geographic area. The area should correspond to existing geographic or political boundaries such as:

- (i) Designated planning areas under sections 208 and 303 of CWA;
- (ii) Sewer districts or sewer authorities;
- (iii) City, county, or State political boundaries;
- (iv) State highway systems;
- (v) Standard metropolitan statistical areas as defined by the Office of Management and Budget;
- (vi) Urban areas with a population of 50,000 or more people as determined by the latest Decennial Census by the Bureau of the Census; or
- (vii) Any other appropriate division or combination of boundaries.

(2) *Sources.* The general permit may be written to regulate one or more categories or subcategories of discharges or sludge use or disposal practices or facilities, within the area described in paragraph (a)(1) of this section, where the sources within a covered subcategory of discharges are either:

- (i) Storm water point sources; or (ii) One or more categories or subcategories of point sources other than storm water point sources, or one or more categories or subcategories of “treatment works treating domestic sewage”, if the sources or “treatment works treating domestic sewage” within each category or subcategory all:
 - (A) Involve the same or substantially similar types of operations;
 - (B) Discharge the same types of wastes or engage in the same types of sludge use or disposal practices;
 - (C) Require the same effluent limitations, operating conditions, or standards for sewage sludge use or disposal;
 - (D) Require the same or similar monitoring; and (E) In the opinion of the Director, are more appropriately controlled under a general permit than under individual permits.

(3) *Water quality-based limits.* Where sources within a specific category or subcategory of dischargers are subject to water quality-based limits imposed pursuant to § 122.44, the sources in that specific category or subcategory shall be subject to the same water quality-based effluent limitations.

(4) *Other requirements.* (i) The general permit must clearly identify the applicable conditions for each category or subcategory of dischargers or treatment works treating domestic sewage covered by the permit.

(ii) The general permit may exclude specified sources or areas from coverage.

(b) *Administration—(1) In general.* General permits may be issued, modified, revoked and reissued, or terminated in accordance with applicable requirements of part 124 of this chapter or corresponding State regulations. Special procedures for issuance are found at § 123.44 of this chapter for States.

(2) *Authorization to discharge, or authorization to engage in sludge use and disposal practices.* (i) Except as provided in paragraphs (b)(2)(v) and (vi) of this section, dischargers (or treatment works treating domestic sewage) seeking coverage under a general permit shall submit to the Director a notice of intent to be covered by the general permit. A discharger (or treatment works treating domestic sewage) who fails to submit a notice of intent in accordance with the terms of the permit is not authorized to discharge, (or in the case of sludge disposal permit, to engage in a sludge use or disposal practice), under the terms of the general permit unless the general permit, in accordance with paragraph (b)(2)(v), contains a provision that a notice of intent is not required or the Director notifies a discharger (or treatment works treating domestic sewage) that it is covered by a general permit in accordance with paragraph (b)(2)(vi). A complete and timely, notice of intent (NOI), to be covered in accordance with general permit requirements, fulfills the requirements for permit applications for purposes of §§ 122.6, 122.21, and 122.26. As of December 21, 2025 or an EPA-approved alternative date (*see* 40 CFR 127.24(e) or (f)), all notices of intent submitted in compliance with this section must be submitted electronically by the discharger (or treatment works treating domestic sewage) to the Director or initial recipient, as defined in 40 CFR 127.2(b), in compliance with this section and 40 CFR part 3 (including, in all cases, subpart D to part 3), § 122.22, and 40 CFR part 127. 40 CFR part 127 is not intended to undo existing requirements for electronic reporting. Prior to this date, and independent of 40 CFR part 127, discharger (or treatment works treating domestic sewage) may be required to report electronically if specified by a particular permit or if required to do so by state law.

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