

### 3.04 SURFACE WATER DISCHARGE PERMIT (Municipal)

- ❑ *Question: Will I discharge any wastewater to any place other than the sanitary sewer? OR*
- ❑ *Question: Do I own or operate a sewage or water treatment plant?*

#### Why do I need this approval?

The municipal surface water discharge permit is a combined state and federal permit under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES). This permit is issued for sewage treatment plants and some water treatment plants that discharge to State surface waters. The permit is designed to protect the quality of the body of water receiving the discharge. Anyone who discharges wastewater to surface waters may need a surface water discharge permit. Applicants include municipalities, counties, federal facilities, schools, and commercial water and wastewater treatment plants, as well as treatment systems for private residences that discharge to surface waters.

#### What laws or regulations give MDE the legal authority to issue this approval?

FEDERAL: Federal Clean Water Act.  
STATE: Environment Article, Title 9, Subtitle 3;  
COMAR 26.08.01 through 26.08.04.

#### What is the process to get this approval?

- 1) Submit a completed application form. To request a form, call (410) 537-3323 or download the form from the website at:  
<https://mde.maryland.gov/programs/Permits/WaterManagementPermits/Pages/waterpermits.aspx>
- 2) The Department publishes notice of the application and provides an opportunity for an informational meeting.
- 3) The Department checks that the project is in the county water and sewer plan.
- 4) The Department develops permit limits.
- 5) The Department publishes a notice of tentative determination and conducts a public hearing, if requested.
- 6) The Department issues the permit if adverse comments are not received.
- 7) If adverse comments are received, the Department prepares a final determination and publishes an additional notice providing 15 days for citizens to request a contested case hearing.
- 8) The Department issues the permit if the final determination is not contested.
- 9) If contested, administrative procedure for the appeal process is followed.

#### Before I apply for this approval, do I need to get any approvals from the local or federal government?

Except for private residences, the proposal must be included in county water and sewer plans.

#### Is this approval directly related or contingent on other approvals?

No.

#### Are there any other requirements?

PRE-APPROVAL: The proposal must be included in the county water and sewer plan. Individual residences are exempted from this pre-approval requirement.  
POST-APPROVAL: Must meet all effluent limits, monitoring requirements, and other permit conditions. Applicant must obtain a Water and Sewerage Construction Permit prior to construction activity.

#### How long should I expect it to take to get the approval once I submit a completed application?

Type of Facility	Turnaround Time
New minor facilities	9 months
New major facilities	12 months
Renewal minor facilities	N/A, watershed schedule
Renewal major facilities	N/A, watershed schedule

Also see [Standard Turnaround Times](#).

#### Once I get this approval, how long will it last?

Maximum of five years

#### How much will this approval cost?

No fee, except for the cost of publishing required notices.

#### Who do I contact with additional questions?

Yen-Der Cheng  
Municipal Discharge Permits Division  
[Yen-Der.Cheng@maryland.gov](mailto:Yen-Der.Cheng@maryland.gov)  
(410) 537-3671