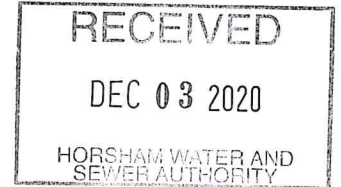


<https://www.waterteconline.com/industry/article/14188203/new-strategy-will-address-pfas-through-discharge-permits>

New strategy will address PFAS through discharge permits

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The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recently announced two steps to address per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in the environment.

First, EPA issued a memorandum detailing an interim National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permitting strategy for addressing PFAS in EPA-issued wastewater permits. Second, EPA released information on progress in developing new analytical methods to test for PFAS compounds in wastewater and other environmental media. Together, these actions help ensure that federally enforceable wastewater monitoring for PFAS can begin as soon as validated analytical methods are finalized.

“Better understanding and addressing PFAS is a top priority for EPA, and the agency is continuing to develop needed research and policies,” said EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler. “For the first time in EPA’s history, we are utilizing all of our program offices to address a singular, cross-cutting contaminant and the agency’s efforts are critical to supporting our state and local partners.”

“Managing and mitigating PFAS in water is a priority for the Office of Water as we continue our focus on meeting 21st century challenges,” said EPA Assistant Administrator for Water David Ross. “These actions mark important steps in developing the underlying science and permitting techniques to address PFAS in wastewater where the discharge of these chemicals may be of concern.”

EPA’s interim NPDES permitting strategy for PFAS provides recommendations from a cross-agency workgroup on an interim approach to include PFAS-related conditions in EPA-issued NPDES permits. EPA is the permitting authority for three states (Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Mexico), the District of Columbia, most U.S. territories including Puerto Rico, Indian Country, and certain federal facilities. The strategy advises EPA permit writers to consider including PFAS monitoring at facilities where these chemicals are expected to be present in wastewater discharges, including from municipal separate storm sewer systems and industrial stormwater permits. The PFAS that could be considered for monitoring are those that will have validated EPA analytical methods for wastewater testing, which the agency anticipates being available on a phased-in schedule as multi-lab validated wastewater analytical methods are finalized. The agency’s interim strategy also encourages the use of best management practices where appropriate to control or abate the discharge of PFAS and includes recommendations to facilitate information sharing to foster adoption of best practices across states and localities.

In coordination with the interim NPDES permitting strategy, EPA is also providing information on the status of analytical methods needed to test for PFAS in wastewater. EPA is developing analytical methods in collaboration with the U.S. Department of Defense to test for PFAS in wastewater and other environmental media, such as soils. The agency is releasing a list of 40 PFAS chemicals that are the subject of analytical method development. This method would be in addition to Method 533 and Method 537.1 that are already approved and can measure 29 PFAS chemicals in drinking water. EPA anticipates that multi-lab validated testing for PFAS will be finalized in 2021. For more information on testing method validation, see <https://www.epa.gov/cwa-methods>.