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Ohio EPA Schedules Meeting to Discuss Discharge Permit for Ashtabula County Water Treatment Plant

An Ashtabula water company's request to increase the amount of wastewater it discharges to Lake Erie will be the focus of a July 27, 2011, Ohio EPA public meeting. The information session and public hearing will begin at 5 p.m. at the Ashtabula City Hall, 4717 Main Avenue, Ashtabula.

Ohio EPA is considering an application submitted by the Ohio American Water Company—Ashtabula District to renew a discharge permit for the company's water treatment plant located at 1330 West First Street. The application includes a request to increase the amount of wastewater the company discharges from 370,000 to 590,000 gallons per day.

Ohio American wants to improve filtering of the raw water it pulls from Lake Erie for purification into drinking water. The wastewater generated from the filtering process is known as backwash and contains sediments (total suspended solids) that are discharged to the lake where they originated.

If approved, the increased discharge may result in a change from the current water quality conditions of Lake Erie, but cannot violate Ohio's water quality standards that protect human health and the environment. Ohio EPA will consider the technical, economic, social and environmental aspects of the project before deciding to issue or deny the permit renewal.

Comments on the request for a permit renewal and increased discharge may be presented at the meeting or submitted in writing to: Ohio EPA, Division of Surface Water, Permits Processing Unit, P.O. Box 1049, Columbus, Ohio 43216-1049. The public comment period ends August 3, 2011.

The company's application and related materials are available for review at Ohio EPA's Northeast District Office in Twinsburg by calling (330) 963-1200.

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